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MARCH 24 2003

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SIMPLY THE BEST

Adrienne Clarkson has brought new purpose—and pizzazz—to the office of governor general.

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COVER: PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEANS, PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S (ABOVE); KAI PFAFFENBACH/REUTERS



NO INTEREST IN CONFLICT

Paul Martin did what official Ottawa wanted. Good for him; bad for others.

SOME YEARS AGO, I talked to Paul Martin about the time he bet the farm—literally—on his future. In 1981, Martin wanted to buy Canada Steamship Lines, which Paul Desmarais at Power Corp. was selling for $180 million. The collateral Martin put up for the needed loan included his farm in Quebec's Eastern Townships. At the time, interest rates were at an astounding 22.5 per cent. If they continued to rise, he was finished. If they had peaked, he was fine—and stood to make a fortune.

As we know, Martin won his bet, which has become part of political lore—and a big element contributing to his reputation as one of the few federal politicians with high-end business credentials. So you see why, beyond Martin's declared fondness for ships, he loves CSL as an entity, and has been loath to separate himself from it. The debate over whether he should divest his holdings if he becomes prime minister has preoccupied official Ottawa for weeks—more so, it's seemed at times, than even the prospect of war—even as it's barely registered beyond. On an anecdotal level, I can't think of a single person I've met outside of political or journalistic circles who's cared enough to raise the issue in conversation, even as it dominated headlines and news broadcasts. And it's not as though everyone just learned for the first time about a) Martin's ownership of the company or, b) his interest in becoming prime minister: he never made a secret of either.

So I confess to surprise last week at Martin's announcement that he'll turn control of CSL over to his sons. Tactically, it's a smart move that defuses the issue before it reaches the public's radar screen, and it reflects, in an admirable way, how passionately Martin wants to become prime minister. But it also exemplifies the profound disconnect that exists between official Ottawa, the journalists who cover it, and the rest of the country. That's because it's an issue that functions on two levels: the first is the debate over what constitutes conflict of interest among politicians, while the second is the extent to which the Ottawa press gallery, by driving that debate so aggressively, assumes its role to be akin to that of the elected opposition.

The dangers of too rigid conflict-of-interest constraints are obvious. Politicians are already in such disrepute that it's hard to imagine why a successful person in the private sector would want to run—and this adds further to that undesirability. Forget the facile argument that Martin should have sold all his holdings, as is the case with politicians in the United States. The Canadian business community is much smaller, the list of buyers for a shipping company that much shorter, and pockets are much less deep—unless Martin sold to a non-Canadian, and imagine the fuss if he did *that*. And even if he sold and plunked all the money in a savings account to gather interest, you could still say that he'd be conflicted, because the PM gets approval over the appointment of the governor of the Bank of Canada—who has responsibility for setting interest rates.

An aggressive press gallery is best when it expands the terms of debate—such as revelations of pork-barrelling by Jean Chrétien in the so-called Shawinigate controversy. Journalists do less well when we simply amplify debate, rather than adding to its content. That happened this time. Don't feel sorry for Martin, who emerges with financial and political fortunes intact. He entered politics when the old rules were still in place—but in winning his present battle, he lost a future war on behalf of others who come after him. The sad thing is, we'll never even hear about the ones who stay away as a result.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

response@macleans.ca to comment on The Editor's Letter

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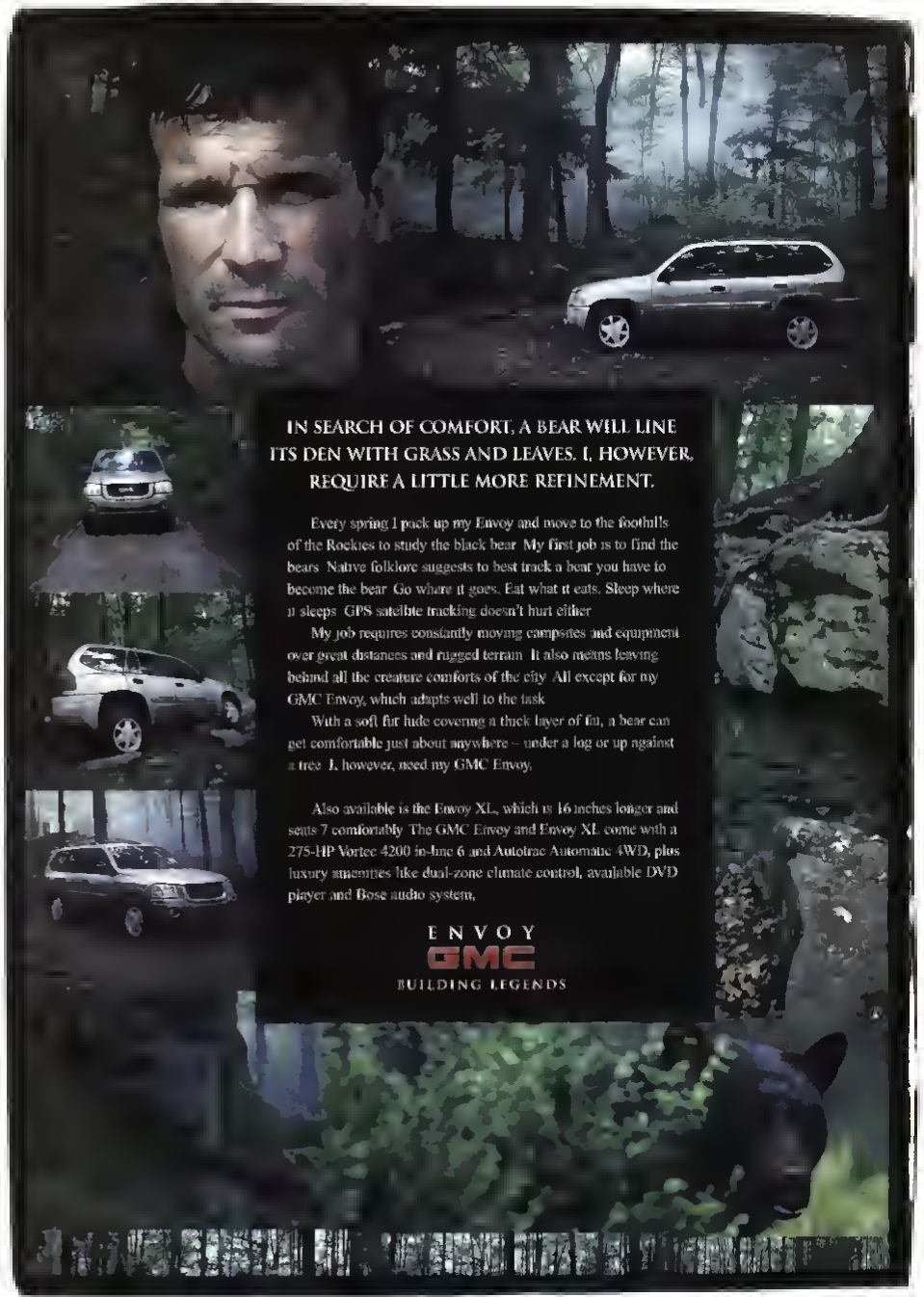
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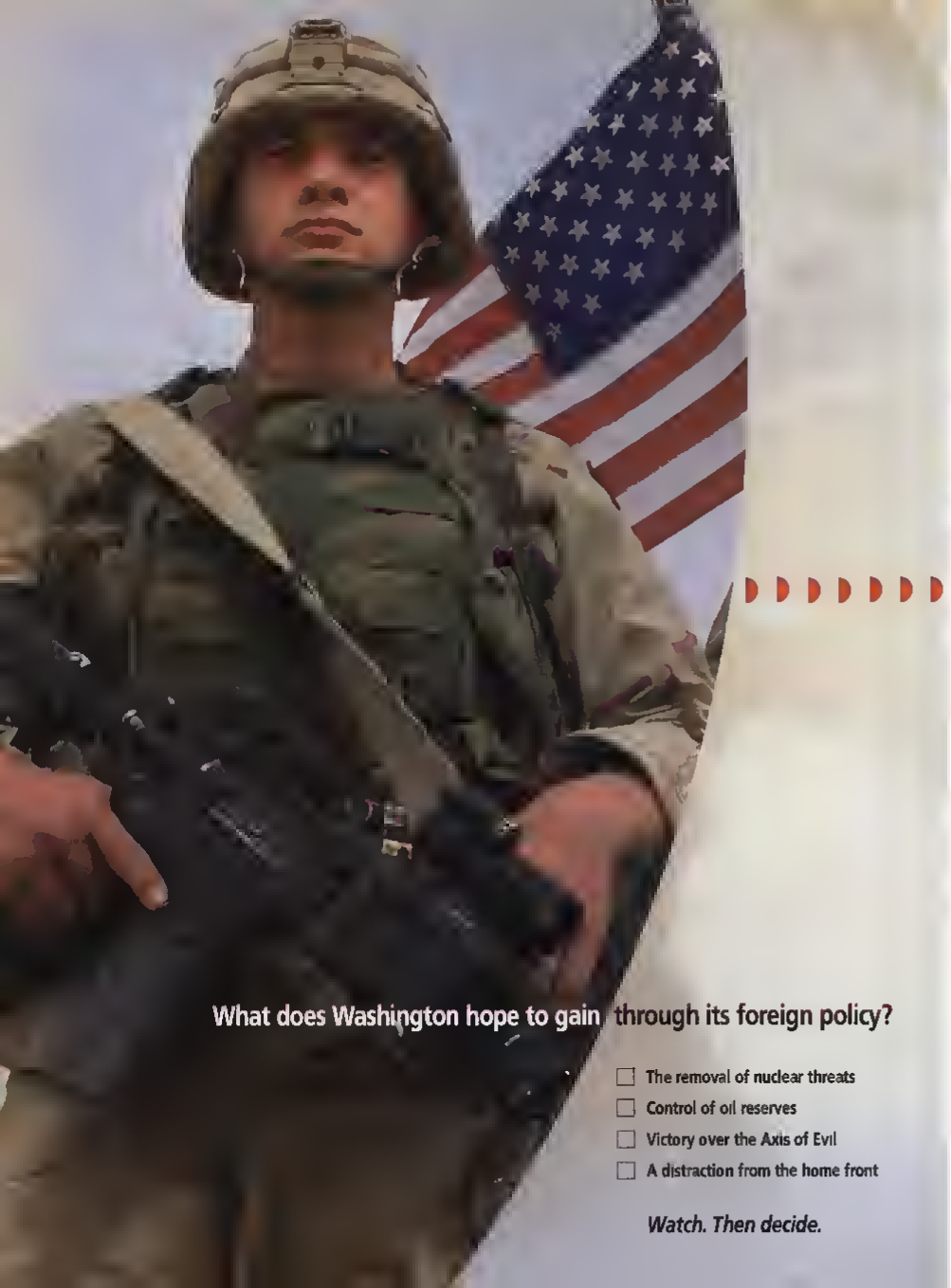
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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



PREPARING FOR THE WORLD STAGE

Every locker room needs an Ada Chan. She's the one who plays practical jokes, makes wisecracks and generally helps to keep things light and enjoyable for her teammates.

A rhythmic gymnast and swimmer, Ada, a student, (above, getting skier Ken Read's autograph at the Special Olympics Sports Celebrities Festival Day) is part of Canada's 58-member Special Olympics team which will compete this summer at the World Games in Dublin.

"With her humour, spirit, leadership and work ethic, Ada represents the best of the Special Olympics movement," says Bonnie Donovan, her coach of six years with the Ottawa Rhythmic Cats gymnastics club.

A Hong Kong native who now calls Orleans, Ont., home, 18-year-old Ada is *Maclean's* Special Olympics Canada athlete for 2003. She qualified for the World Games with her performance at the National Summer Games last year.

"Ada was the Canadian Special Olympics Level 3 rhythmic gymnastics gold medal champion," says Donovan. "She competed against athletes from every province and won three golds and one silver in her four routines."

This marks the 13th year that *Maclean's* is a SOC communications partner. The relationship has enabled Special Olympics Canada to tell millions of Canadians about its mission to enrich the lives of Canadians with a mental disability through sport, says John Byrne, Team Manager of Team Canada.

"Canada's involvement in the World Games allows athletes and coaches to showcase their abilities on the international stage," adds Byrne. "With the summer games happening for the first time outside of North America, our team will have the chance to truly feel part of a global movement."

To learn more about Special Olympics Canada, visit *www.specialolympics.ca*. And watch for a special supplement on the World Games in a future issue of *Maclean's*.

For further information contact: behindthescenes@macleans.ca

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'Instead of killing people, wealthier nations such as the United States and Canada should invest even a fraction of the costs of war in saving lives worldwide.' —PAT CHRISTIE, Calgary

Letters to the Editor: letters@macleans.ca

War and appeasement

At first, I was surprised that Jonathon Gatehouse chose Britain as a place to express his anti-war bias ("War: what is it good for?" Cover, March 10). Then I realized it was a good move, for Britain was full of well-meaning appeasers in the '30s. The loner was the visionary Churchill, who sized up Hitler when he became chancellor on Jan. 30, 1933. There were scores of debates and protests, as today. By 1939, Hitler had already built his war machine, thanks largely to peaceniks. Have we not learned yet that, more often than not, the majority chooses the wrong path? Let's recognize that the bulk of the people are short sighted, and let's get on with the job.

A. R. Pettigrew, London, Ont.

Nice reflection on the war perspective from England. I was lucky enough to attend the peace rally—my first—while in London. I've never been a political activist (I am now 30 years old), but the necessity to help make a point moved me to action. I appreciate that our Prime Minister is not jumping on a bandwagon, but seems to really be thinking, and listening to his country.

Erin Carey, Toronto

Jonathon Gatehouse has listened to real people and written superbly about the stupidity of American imperialism. I also commend you for publishing Arthur Kent's "Ignoring the lessons of the past?" (Cover, March 10). Now, if you'd just treat the Israel/Palestine situation with the same sort of intelligent logic, that would be great.

Betty Brightwell, Victoria

I feel sorry for Jonathon Gatehouse as he travelled England searching in vain for someone who supports Tony Blair's policy on Iraq. I suggest that he talk to some of the Labour MPs who voted in favour of the policy. If, as Gatehouse notes, close to a third (122) voted against Blair, about 244 must have voted in favour. Surely one of them would have been willing to be quoted.

Tom Ham, Parham, Ont.



What is war good for? Why not ask those Holocaust survivors, those liberated from the concentration camps, those who saw the wave of evil in the Nazi movement but did *nothing*. Ask those countries liberated from German occupation, those widows of Pearl Harbor and relatives of all those who died on 9/11. Ask the black slaves in 1860s U.S.A. and the American colonists in the 1700s. War is good for *freedom*.

Stephanie Monyak, Washington, Pa.

Saddam has shown a complete disregard for human rights. Rather than comply with the relatively simple UN Security Council resolutions, he has prospered while the Iraqi people have suffered under sanctions.

TO FIGHT OR NOT TO FIGHT—THE DEBATE OVER A POSSIBLE WAR IN IRAQ CONTINUES IN our mailbag. "If George Bush goes ahead and attacks Iraq without UN authorization," asks Glenn Mair of Vancouver, "will the UN impose economic sanctions against the United States?" Cyndi Walkup of Tulsa, Okla., notes that some people don't think Saddam Hussein is evil enough to warrant a war. "Doesn't torture enough children, I suppose. Peace at all cost—what a scary thought."

Saddam continues to brutalize the Iraqi people. Over the years, he has attacked four nearby countries, attempted to assassinate the Emir of Kuwait and former U.S. president George Bush, gassed Kurdish civilians and Iranians and flamed Kuwait's oil fields as his armies were removed from that country. He actively supports the suicide bombing of Israeli civilians. Canada is a beautiful country, and it contains the nicest people in the world. But Jean Chrétien, rather than speaking against the brutalities of Saddam's regime, speaks of what an abomination it would be to change that regime. And the MP Carolyn Parrish, rather than hating Saddam's atrocities, hates the "damn Americans" for trying to end those atrocities forever. What in the hell has happened to Canada?

Matthew Schaeffer, Columbus, Ohio

I think Liberal MP Carolyn Parrish has a bad case of the winter blues. How else to explain her comment, "Damn Americans. I hate those bastards"? I hear there's a nice sunny resort in Cuba called Guantanamo Bay. It's a Club Med for like-minded vermin. Those American bastards would be happy to accommodate Parrish, free of charge. After all, Americans love paying our way in defending the freedoms, rights and interests we Canadians take for granted.

Julian A. Belanger, Windsor, Ont.

As a Canadian living and working in the United States for the past 11 years, I am appalled at Canada's lack of support for the U.S. Like it or not, Canada is tied to the U.S. with an unbreakable bond. Each is the other's best customer. One does not bite the hand that feeds him! When the dust settles, and all those responsible for 9/11 are dead or imprisoned—as they surely will be—the Americans will look around, and they will remember who supported their struggle against terrorism.

R. G. Irwin, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

When governments resort to vacuous slogans like "war on terrorism," "weapons of mass destruction," "let us free Iraq for democracy" and "axis of evil," we can usually be certain that we have been had. The "weapons of mass destruction" gibberish from the Bush camp is especially ironic. The United States has more of these weapons than the rest of the planet combined and



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has used them more often than any other country. Moreover, most of the weapons of mass destruction in the world held by other countries were purchased from those very same Americans.

John L. Rebman, Surrey, B.C.

In "Ignoring the lessons of the past," Arthur Kent makes some strong points about the political handling of events in the aftermath of hostilities in the Gulf War. It should be noted that this is nothing new. Look past American official histories relating to U.S. actions in *all* major conflicts of the 20th century and some facts are clear. Regardless of the skill and bravery exhibited by American troops, the higher echelons of command have always been submerged in bureaucracy. They have tried to command far from the front lines, and have been hamstrung by the ineptitude of their political masters.

Jason L. Craig, Halifax

Arthur Kent quotes Colin Powell's 1991 plans for dealing with the retreating Iraqi Republican Guard. "Our strategy to go after this army is very, very simple. First we're going to cut it off, and then we're going to kill it." Kent goes on to regret that 70 per cent of the Republican Guard escaped while tens of thousands of their comrades were slaughtered. He sums up this horrendous act by saying "the U.S. had fumbled the football on the goal line." I submit that genocide is genocide no matter what the political climate. Even the Wehrmacht, following its encirclement after the siege of Stalingrad, was given the option of surrender.

Bob Prud'homme, Sandspit, B.C.

Aw, shucks

You grabbed my attention with the bold, inspiring photo of pilot senior Daphne Schiff on page 2 of your March 3 issue, and never let me go. The image of her diving with the Bedouins and drag racing Jeeps over sand dunes is absolutely delightful ("Retired reborn," Cover). Anthony Wilson-Smith and Donald Coxe both gave me new thoughts to mull over concerning the impending war against Iraq. In Peter C. Newman's column Sir John Bond's solid, steady work as chairman of HSBC was refreshing in this day of perceived corporate greed and flashy lifestyles. As for Red Robinson ("Q&A"), what a fantastic slice of musical history!



Schiff, at 78, presents an inspiring image

How lucky can any man be? Congratulations to all at *Maclean's*. Collectively, you stirred at least this Canadian soul!

Susan Zaffino, Toronto

Here's the door

Forcing Canadians to retire at 65 is not only poor human resources policy, it is also a violation of fundamental rights ("Retired reborn," Cover, March 3). Making employment decisions solely on age, rather than ability and performance, should be no more acceptable than racism, sexism or homophobia. Given the demographic weight of baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1965), it seems likely that politicians cannot long ignore age discrimination. Australia, New Zealand and the United States have eliminated compulsory retirement, while Britain will shortly do so. We can only hope that Canada's politicians, and courts, will follow this example.

Thomas R. Klassen, Assistant Professor of Labour Studies, York University, Toronto

A friend in need

L. Ian MacDonald doubts "if, as a matter of routine, Harvard gives out M.B.A. degrees to morons" ("Our only best friends," The Back Page, March 3). George Bush was denied admittance to the University of Texas, so off to Harvard he did go. With five U.S. degrees, I know it takes money, connections and a famous family to get into Harvard after being rejected at a state university. Nelson Mandela, a real leader and a compassionate person, spoke the truth on George, no foresight, can't think properly.

William G. Hills, Cranbrook, B.C.

It's time to admit that we are America's friend. "Friend" does not mean "servant." "Best friend" does not mean "puppet." "Pro-American" does not mean "anti-Canadian." "Trust" does not mean "blind agreement." I'm proud to be a Canadian and I'm proud to have Americans as best friends.

Bob Hunsberger, Breslau, Ont.

The dope dilemma

I am 14, and every day I see at least two or three students come to my high-school classes high ("Just say 'yes,'" Essay, March 3). Now imagine if the drug was legalized; almost every student would have access to it, one way or another. I hear students at lunch discuss how they dream of being able to walk into the local variety store and "ask for a 20 bag of your finest weed." There is no way marijuana should be legalized.

Christopher Cosack, Shelburne, Ont.

Getting the job done

In Michael Snider's article "Wired to another world" (Internet, March 3), he talks in some detail of why on-line games produce the brain chemical dopamine, but fails to touch upon another important reason why these games are so addictive. I believe that one of the big draws to games like *EverQuest* is the sense of accomplishment when you have completed a goal or finished a level. When you log off after six or more hours, you have the sense that you've accomplished something—or know you haven't. Workplace dissatisfaction and failure make it easy for people to get immersed in on-line games.

Methilus Lettington, Nanaimo, B.C.

Home, sweet home

I opened my *Maclean's* and there it was—that's my town ("Land, lots of land," Over to You, March 10). Kamsack, Sask., is "a pretty little town," and I think of it often. And as much as the author, Myrna Dey, says she can imagine English Bay with seagulls circling, I can tell you that even though I now live very close to that bay and those seagulls, when everything gets hectic, I miss my farm home. I wish I were there. I think of the rolling hills around Kamsack, of the wide-open Prairie skies, of how I could see Kamsack on the horizon 7½ miles away through our living room window. I am so sorry that Kamsack, like many other Prairie towns, is shrinking. I hope it will not disappear.

Colleen W. Rauckmen-McKenzie, Burnaby, B.C.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

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Serbia | Saluting an assassinated reformer as old hatreds resurface

A fresh tragedy for a nation with a troubled history An unwelcome echo of past turmoil for a world on the verge of war The assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, shot by three snipers outside his Belgrade offices last week, threatens to throw his country back into the darkness from which it has only recently begun to emerge A tough-minded reformer who played a key role in toppling Yugoslavian dictator Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, the 50-year-old Djindjic was respected in the West, but controversial at home His decision to hand Milosevic over to a war crimes tribunal in The Hague to face charges of orchestrating genocide in the 1992-95 conflict in Bosnia drew the wrath of hardline nationalists and other allies of the former strongman. In recent months, Djindjic's crackdown on Serbia's entrenched organized criminal gangs earned him even more dangerous enemies

The Serbian government responded to the sniper attack by declaring a state of emergency, calling in the army to take over for the police, suspending civil liberties, closing airports, train and bus stations in the capital, Belgrade By week's end, investigators had rounded up more than 180 suspects, many of them members of the Zemun group, suspected of carrying out the assassination. Alleged mastermind Milorad Lukovic, the former head of the Red Berets, an elite police unit which carried out "dirty" jobs for Milosevic, was still being sought Last month, Zemun was implicated in an unsuccessful attempt on Djindjic's life when a vehicle swerved into his motorcade.

The vast majority of Serbians expressed outrage at the shooting, while the government vowed to continue his reforms. But the killing comes as a grim warning to those who follow in Djindjic's footsteps The demons of the Balkans are not easily tamed.



Mourners at the prime minister's office, Djindjic, westward leaning

ScoreCard

▲Ursus americanus Britain s palace guards, in nod to animal rights groups, may end tradition of wearing headgear made from pelts of Canada's black bears. Faux fur alternative, though, risks looking even more like soldiers giving shoulder rides to stuffed toys.

▼Frank's Pizza: Selkirk, Man , pizza shop gets extra helping of bad publicity after owner fires driver Marcella McAulay for stopping to aid gunshot victim Fresh pizza a life or death proposition, sure But delivery in 30 minutes or you're fired rule a bit harsh.

▼Ontario teachers: Province's education minister jeered and splashed with water while leaving meeting with Catholic teachers, some wearing paper bags to hide identity Pop quiz: how do you spell anger management?

▼TV Ernie Eves. Ontario premier sends legislature home amid plans to deliver March 27 budget from a TV studio. Town-hall approach upsets those who believe in the Magna Carta. Wait until he campaigns in a bubble high above the madding crowd.

▲Paul Martin Dodges icebergs in path to Sussex Drive by turning over shipping empire to his three sons Opposition unmoved, wants country left to professional politicians untainted by any signs of business success.

Quote of the week | 'My relationship to sheep is a bit ambivalent now. I like them, but not when they come flying through the air.'

Oslo concert-goer PER KRISTIAN HAGEN, 25, who was hit with a severed sheep head which was part of a rock act

VAN MILUTINOVIC/REUTERS; MIKICA PETROVIC/AP PHOTO



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REUNITED It was a fairy-tale ending for a golden-haired girl who played the harp and liked movies about angels. Nine months after being kidnapped at gunpoint from her Salt Lake City home, while younger sister Mary Katherine pretended to be asleep, 15-year-old Elizabeth Smart was found unharmed in the company of a raggedy evangelical couple who may have tried to make her their daughter, or perhaps a child bride. Now back with her parents, Ed and Lois (left), who say she was brainwashed, Smart turned up 24 km from the family home, at first denying to police her real name. She and her captors were wearing wigs and carrying bedrolls.

WORLD

PAYOUTS American negotiators said Libya is close to accepting responsibility for the terrorist bombing of a Pan Am passenger jet near **Lockerbie**, Scotland, in 1988, and is prepared to offer compensation of about $4 billion to families who lost 270 loved ones. A Libyan intelligence agent, Abdel Baset al Megrahi, was convicted of the crime in 2001 and economic sanctions were imposed against Libya as a result.

Saddam Hussein sent the equivalent of $385,000 to the families of 26 Palestinians killed in recent **clashes with Israel**, among them two gunmen and a suicide bomber. The Iraqi strongman has paid out more than $52 million to the families of Palestinians who died in the course of the 29-month uprising.

ESCAPE Six gunmen dressed as French police used rocket launchers and other military weapons to blast their way into a Paris prison and free gangster Antonio "Succo" Ferrara, an Italian armed robber serving an eight-year sentence. It was the second escape by Ferrara in five years. He is one of 17 high-profile prisoners, including suspected Basque and Corsican terrorists, who have strolled, shot, flown or tricked their way out of **French prisons** over the past year.

DOUBLE DUTCH A rare public spat in the House of Orange boiled over into the legislature and courts. Free-spirited Princess Margarita, a niece of Queen Beatrix of Holland, is suing her aunt for $53 million, accusing her of **abusing royal privilege** by ordering a secret investigation into Margarita's commoner husband Edwin de Roy van Zuydewijn that destroyed his business. The angry princess also revealed a secret affair of the queen's father, Bernhard.

Nurse Lucy de Berk, accused of 13 mercy killings in hospitals in The Hague, allowed she had a "**complex personality**" but denied she is a psychopath or serial murderer. A former Vancouver prostitute, de Berk was on duty when all 13 deaths occurred, a highly unlikely occurrence, the court was told.

INDIA Archeologists began digging for a **lost temple** in the northern Indian town of Ayodhya, site of one of the country's worst religious clashes 10 years ago when nearly 3,000 died. Hindus say a temple on the site, birthplace of the god-king Ram, was destroyed by Muslims in the 16th century. A court ordered the excavation to resolve the ongoing dispute, blamed for a recent spate of train bombings.

CYPRUS High-level UN mediation, involving Secretary General Kofi Annan, failed to resolve the **29-year standoff** between Greece and Turkey over the disputed Mediterranean island. Turkish Cypriots balked at a referendum proposal and lashed out at European Union officials for calling them an occupying force.

CHINA The Rolling Stones, rock's bad boys, are poised to take on the Chinese market in a historic concert next month, but only on condition they drop four songs from their repertoire: *Brown Sugar*, *Beast of Burden*, *Honky Tonk Woman* and *Let's Spend the Night Together*. Chinese authorities say the songs promote **too much sex** and interracial coupling.

TOM SMART/DESERET NEWS/AP PHOTO

CANADA

INHERITED Liberal leadership front-runner Paul Martin attempted ro resolve the con flict controversy over his family business, **Canada Steamship Lines**, by turning over control of rhe internarional company to his three sons: Paul W., 36, a CSL employ ee in Singapore; Jamie, 33, a Toronto-based screenwriter; and David, 28, who works for Merrill Lynch in Montreal. The three will now assume all the voting stock

POLITICS They're off in Quebec. A sudden turnaround in the polls provoked Premier Bernard Landry inro calling an election for April 14. The governing Parti Québecois is gambling that its family-oriented platform—requiring employers to offer a four-day workweek to any parent with a child under 12—will break the old **political jinx** of two terms and out. The PQ, the Liberals and the Action democratique are all close in support.

Coincidence, no doubt, on the same day as the election call, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien rolled out a $750 million top up to official bilingualism, targeting especially **minority language** immersion programs in areas of provincial responsibility.

JUSTICE Former Saskatoon police officers Ken Munson and Dan Hatchen, convicted of **abandoning** an unruly native man on the outskirts of town three years ago on a cold January night, will go to jail for eight months. Their request for a new trial was denied.

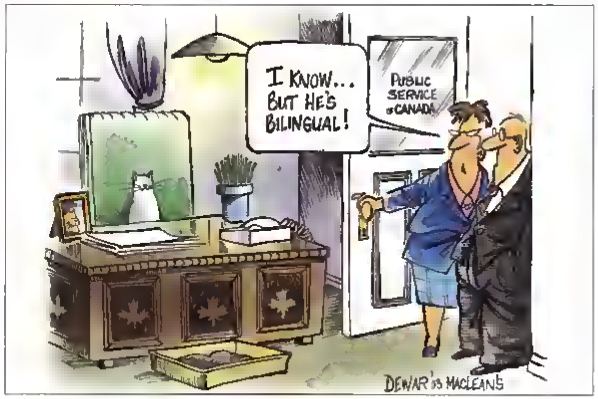


HISTORY'S LOSS An overnight blaze destroyed much of Edmonton's Old Strathcona, a historic district that had once been a staging ground for the Yukon gold rush and was more recently revitalized as a trendy area in which to stroll and sip coffee. At least six shops and restaurants were gutted, one building collapsed. It was the second large fire in the Alberta capital last week

A Quebec court found Canadian soldier Claude Michaud, 45, so **traumatized** by his service in Bosnia that he is not criminally responsible for threatening to kill Jean Chretien during a relephone call in June 2002.

A novel Edmonton bylaw will allow police to ticket **schoolyard bullies** who repeatedly push, shove and name-call their peers. Believed to be the first law of its kind in Canada, it carries a maximum fine of $250.

BY SUSAN DEWAR



MEDIA The CBC responded in kind to a civil suit launched against it by an RCMP officer who claimed he was defamed in a 1998 episode of *The Fifth Estate*. It is suing the Mountie's legal fund for trying to "silence **criticism**."

HEALTH

ALLERGIES The good news: scientists have developed the first drug—it involves **monthly injections**—to protect people with peanut allergies, the leading cause of food allergy deaths in North America. The bad news is that legal infighting among the three companies with rights to the vaccine has stalled final testing. Scientists also reported that the growing number of lotions and baby creams on the market containing peanut oil is contributing to peanut allergies.

ARTIFICIAL PARTS California based neurobiologists have created what they say is the first artificial brain part, a silicon hippocampus about the size of a cashew that is the base for **long-term memory**.

Actor Christopher Reeve, paralyzed and on a respirator since breaking his neck eight years ago, has had electrodes implanted in his diaphragm that allow him to breathe naturally for two hours at a stretch

TYLER BROWNE DUE/EDMONTON SUN/CP PHOTO



As you grow older, your tastes change.



Just as your taste in fashion accessories has evolved, so too, has your taste in snacks. That's why Chewy has introduced the Cran-Almond Trail Mix bar. Its unique combination of cranberries, almonds, raisins and whole grain Quaker oats gives it a grownup taste and makes it a truly satisfying adult snack. Also available in Tropical Fruit and Nut Medley.



Mansbridge on the Record



LIFE AT THE BOTTOM

You think this won't happen to you. Then one day the elevator doesn't open.

YOU ALWAYS ASSUME it will never happen to you. And because year after year it never has, you rarely even think about the possibility anymore. And then it happens.

I was in Ottawa the other morning for a conference, and shortly after breakfast, I got in a hotel elevator with 11 other delegates. The fact I can tell you exactly how many other people were sharing this relatively small space may give a hint as to what was about to happen. We began our journey at the 23rd floor with the basement—marked "LL" on the elevator directory—as our destination. The descent was uneventful until we reached the bottom, with an ominous thud that immediately produced a few funny comments—funny because we all assumed this would only last seconds. Afraid not.

Suddenly, there was a lot of finger-pushing on the elevator buttons, and all kinds of unsolicited and uninformed advice from the back of the elevator (yes, that's where I was standing). Nothing worked, so it was time to call for help. Our cellphones read "no service", so we turned to the elevator phone—in this case, a button hooked up to a speaker connected to the hotel's switchboard. When the operator's voice came on, it sounded like what you hear in return when you order food at a fast-food drive-in. Of course, the clerk probably couldn't understand a word we said either, because all 12 of us were talking at the same time, nervously trying to describe how we were trapped in Elevator Three, and it was getting hot, and *Hey, get us OUT!* I could have sworn she responded, "Do you want ketchup with that?"

Eventually, we were told that the elevator company had been called and help was on the way, but it would take a while. That produced a few moments of silence, some fellow occupants have since told me they were wondering how long the air would hold out, or how long they could do the same, if you know what I mean. I kept thinking how happy I was that we had at least descended to the basement and weren't still dangling and stranded up there, around the 23rd floor. My friend Keith Boag, who has clearly seen too many Bruce Willis movies, suggested we look for the ceiling trap door—but fortunately, we couldn't find one, or someone would have had to come up with a plan to do something about it. It was getting hot, though, and we decided something had to be done about that—so someone suggested we unscrew three of the four light bulbs. We did, and it cooled things off a little.

What I found interesting was that none of us knew what we were supposed to do—and nowhere in the elevator could we find instructions about what to do in a situation like this. It wasn't life-threatening, but when you're stuck inside an elevator, you'd like to read something reassuring along those lines. (Since this little episode, I've checked with an elevator company about what to do. The key advice is stay calm: there *is* lots of air, and remember that most major buildings have contracts stipulating a minimum time for their service provider to get trapped people out—usually no more than an hour.)

Twenty-eight minutes after the elevator stuttered to its stop, a new voice came on the intercom: "Are you the people trapped in the elevator?" How do you answer that with a straight face? Who did he think we were? Whatever: the real news of this call was met with cheers—we were told we'd be out in two minutes, and we were.

The fresh air was cool, very cool, on our faces as we sprang out, like we'd just been freed from Devil's Island. Funny how an experience like this makes you think twice about things you've always taken for granted: some of my colleagues are still taking the stairs.

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: letters@macleans.ca

Passages

HOCKEY ROUNDUP Fans in Edmonton and Toronto were devastated, with the loss of key players from the Oilers, and the injury of a hockey great newly returned to the Maple Leafs. Right-winger **Anson Carter**, the 28-



year old top scorer for the Oilers, was traded, along with the team's best rookie defenceman, **Ales Pisa**, 26, to the New York Rangers. For a sixth-round draft pick, the Leafs grabbed centre **Doug Gilmour** from Montreal. But in his first game with his new team, the 39 year old former Leafs captain injured his left leg in a collision with 38-year-old left-winger **Dave Lowry** of the Calgary Flames.

Former NHL goalie **John Vanbiesbrouck** stepped down as coach and general manager of the OHL's Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds and apologized to the league for directing a racial slur at player **Trevor Daley**, 19. Vanbiesbrouck, 39, announced last week he would sell his quarter of the Greyhounds.

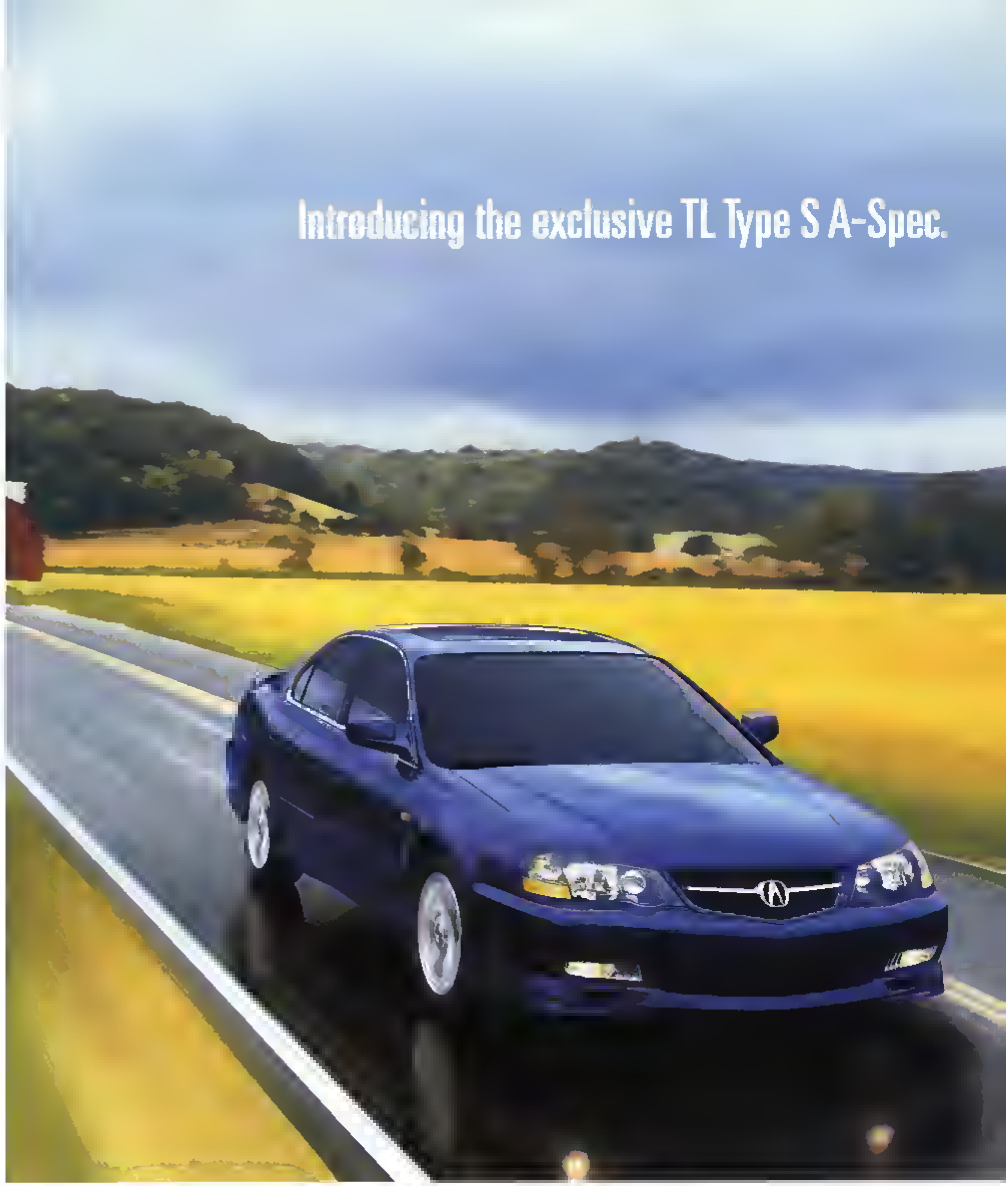
In another hockey scandal, Washington Capitals' right-winger **Jaromir Jagr** acknowledged that he lost US$500,000 on an Internet gambling site in 1998. Jagr, 31, told reporters it was a stupid mistake and that he paid off the debt in 1999.

MOVING Booker Prize-winner **Yann Martel** (*Life of Pi*) has taken a position as writer-in-residence at the Saskatoon Public Library. The 39-year-old Montreal author is currently teaching in Berlin, but will relocate to Saskatoon in October.

WON **Randy Ferbey**, 43, took the Canadian men's curling championship—at the Brier in Halifax—for a record third consecutive year. In an 8-4 final, Ferbey's Alberta rink defeated Nova Scotia's hometown favourites, led by Mark Dacey, 36.

DIED In her 40s **Monica Hughes** started writing seriously for teens. Over three decades, the author of *Hunter in the Dark* produced more than 35 teenage science fiction novels. Born in Liverpool, she moved to Canada in 1952, settling in Edmonton. Hughes, 77, died in hospital after suffering a stroke.

CP PHOTO



RESERVED FOR PRESIDENT

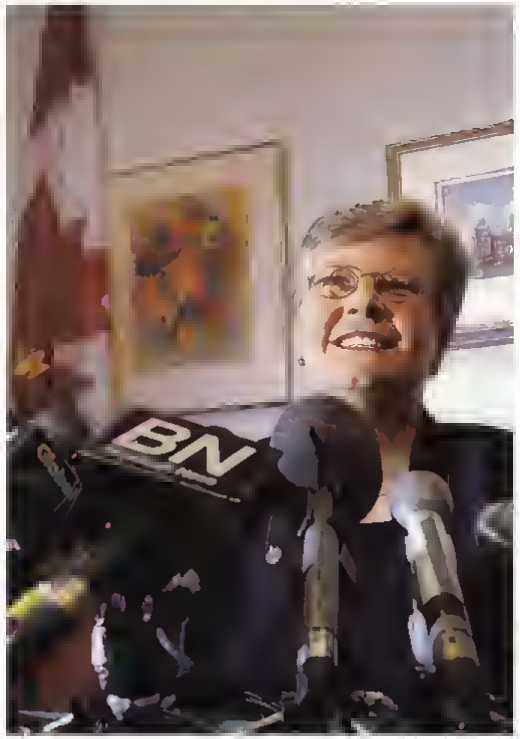
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Announcing her retirement (left); with Day (above), and with Manning at an Oilers game

Exit | Queen of the zingers

She arrived in a blaze of glory, a 36 year-old schoolteacher from northern Alberta elected in a by-election in 1989—the first Reform MP from the again disgruntled West. Official Ottawa was determined not to notice. The Mulroney Tories stashed her in a far-off corner of the House of Commons, almost hidden among the curtains, and said she'd be a one-term wonder. Boy, did they get that wrong.

By the time the 1993 election was over, Deborah Grey had 51 Reform MPs beside her, including party leader Preston Manning. And the Tories were wiped out in their Alberta bastion. For many at that point, she was the matriarchal face of Reform—her schoolmarm certainty and booming auctioneer's voice forming an odd congruence with her relentlessly middle-aged male colleagues. Her attacks on the trough-fed Tories over the Charlottetown accord and MPs' pensions—she ridiculed fellow parliamentarians as "porkers" and cut her own pay by 10 per cent to protest runaway spending—did as much to drive the Conservatives from power in their western base as anything the Liberals ever did. And when she turned full circle two years ago and bought back into the parliamentary pension plan, you could hear the enmity dripping from Tory leader Joe Clark's description of her as "the high priestess of hypocrisy."

It just rolled off. By that point, Grey was the self-described queen of the zingy one-liner. The target could be Brian Mulroney or Jean Chrétien—"Why can't the Prime Minister just swallow his pride, spit out his foot and say he's sorry?" she badgered Chrétien over his GST flip-flop. Or even the many female MPs with whom she never bonded ("I didn't turn out to be the sister they thought they were getting"). She was also the one who drove the final nail—"the gig is up"—into Stockwell Day's coffin. Her high-profile defection legitimized the dissident group who split from the Canadian Alliance caucus for nine months, paving the way for Stephen Harper's leadership ascent and her own eventual marginalization, back to the same remote Commons bench.

Now *her* gig is up. She told her Edmonton constituents last week she won't seek re-election. She's going to get her motorbike out of storage and maybe look for a job as a talk-show host. As the insistent outsider, one who never forgot her early parliamentary slights or saw a sacred cow that wasn't worth attacking, she has all the qualifications. She had those for Parliament, too. It needed her breath of fresh air.

ROBERT SHEPPARD

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JOHN ULAN/CP PHOTO; ROBERT TAYLOR/EDMONTON SUN/CP PHOTO; ADRIAN WYLD/CP PHOTO





SIMPLY THE BEST

Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson will be tough to follow, writes JULIAN BELTRAME

HOW DO YOU judge office holders whose functions are predominantly ceremonial? Is Queen Elizabeth II, for instance, doing a good job? How about her representative in Canada, the governor general? What is the standard—and who is doing the judging? Such dignitaries aren't like politicians, whom voters appraise via the ballot box, or corporate giants whose performance is calibrated daily on the stock market, or even entertainers whose appeal is measured in receipts for CDs and multiplex tickets. What on earth do those exalted personages, with their courtiers, stiff backs, soft handshakes and perfunctory waves, do, anyway?

Few Canadians likely know. Yet when asked how Adrienne Clarkson is performing as governor general, their response is almost universally positive. That includes even her one-time critics—and there were many. Her fans go as far as saying Her Excellency is the best governor general that Canada has had in a generation and may be among a handful of the most important ever. In the 3½ years she and her philosopher-writer husband, John Ralston Saul, have resided at Rideau Hall, she—both of them, really, because they often operate in tandem—has brought elegance, intelligence, diligence, and a sense of purpose to the long-moribund office.

More to the point, people are talking about the Governor General. The office had dropped off the radar screens of most media. Now, Clarkson's speeches and the events she hosts are frequently covered. She also draws large crowds wherever she goes. "She's royal in the true sense," says John Aimers, dominion chairman of the Monarchist League of Canada. "She's the most outstanding governor general in living memory, and my memory goes back to Georges Vanier."

It hasn't happened by accident. In an interview at stately, greystone Rideau Hall, the governor general's official residence in Ottawa's tony Rockcliffe Park neighbourhood, Clarkson, 64, says she thought long and hard about what she wanted to accomplish. "We immediately said we were not going to be reactive" by waiting for invitations, she told *Maclean's*, and instead set about a plan to experience the way Canadians live. As governor general, she could travel as much as she wanted, so who better to bring a vision of Canada as a whole to communities separated by geography and experience? And who better to express admiration for what the country has achieved than the non-political de facto head of state? "So far," Clarkson says, "I'm happy with what we've been able to achieve."

Few would begrudge her self-assessment now. But there were plenty of skeptics in September 1999 when she emerged as Jean Chrétien's surprise nominee. Over a half-dozen safer candidates, including Herb Gray, Joyce Fairbairn, Bob Rae, Iona Campagnolo, Lloyd Axworthy—politicians all—were rumoured to have been in the running. Until then, Clarkson was best known for her storied, 28-year career as an award-winning

With the Queen, touring Rideau Hall with her aide-de-camp, Lt. Cmdr. Garry Best

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/CP ARCHIVE

television personality on such shows as *Take 30* and *Adrienne Clarkson Presents*. She was also known for her controversial views, including opposition to free trade, and her cool hauteur—exemplified by Linda Cullen's impersonation, "I'm Adrienne Clarkson and you're not," which became a running joke on the CBC Radio comedy program *Double Exposure*. But when Clarkson got the nod, some praised Chrétien for his imaginative choice. Former Ontario premier Bill Davis, who in 1982 had appointed her as the province's agent general in Paris, always believed Clarkson would rise to the occasion. "I was very supportive of her," he said. "She did a great job in Paris, she had access to senior people there, she helped our business interests, and she was highly regarded by people in the French government and, just as important, by people in the French cultural community."

Still, the detractors were legion. Her appointment was met with a chorus of vitriol, much of it embarrassingly personal. Critics attacked her for suddenly making her long-standing common-law relationship with Saul official, a kind of shotgun marriage that Chrétien had gently suggested would be appropriate. Others dragged up her housing variance dispute with a neighbour in Toronto's swank Yorkville district, casting her as the villain (she settled out of court after she accepted the post). Most cutting was a portrayal of her as an unloving mother estranged from her 31- and 33-year-old daughters, following a bitter divorce in the mid-'70s from academic Stephen Clarkson, scion of an old-money Toronto family. Whether they have, in fact, reconciled is uncertain—she has made it clear the topic is off limits. "No one can know what really happens in a family," says a friend, who asked not to be named. "I do know that there's not a day goes by when she doesn't think about her children. It remains the biggest wound of her life."

Critics kept the knives out following her installment. An early story had her haughtily ordering Rideau Hall staff to refer to her as Madame, as if she had taken on airs. But an aide explains that there was a valid reason since she no longer goes by the name Mrs. Clarkson, the only alternative in keeping with protocol is Her Excellency. There was a royal scandal when she was barely a month into the job and stayed at the Empress Hotel in Victoria—at public expense, no less—rather than at Government House, where the Queen stays on visits. Again, the aide says his boss's actions were justified; she was chairing the annual lieutenant-governors conference being held on site, and the provincial representatives had also booked rooms in the hotel. Clarkson was also criticized for travelling on the government Challenger, attacked for praising Louis Riel, accused of too vociferously championing the poor and homeless. In turn, Saul was pilloried for describing George W. Bush in his best-selling 2001 book, *On Equilibrium*, as "frail" and "awkward" in the immediate aftermath of Sept. 11. And on it went. If there was more than one interpretation of their actions or words, many chose the blackest and least sympathetic.



Clarkson and Saul are firm exponents of Aboriginal culture's civilizing influence on Canada

'She's so inspiring, she dispels cynicism about our country. And isn't that what we want a governor general to do?'

Clarkson now dismisses the criticism as the price she had to pay for her celebrity. And then, as she set about performing her duties as though this was the job she had been born to do, her critics gradually fell silent. One former doubter, Deborah Grey, is typical. The blunt Canadian Alliance MP, who initially complained about the couple's left-wing partisanship, now says Clarkson "has brought a whole lot of class to the job."

And a sense of mission. Wherever she was needed, Clarkson seemed to be there. In Davis Inlet and Sheshatshiu, consoling two native communities afflicted with hopelessness, teenage suicides and gasoline sniffing. In Ramstein, Germany, comforting six Canadian soldiers wounded in Afghanistan as they disembarked from a U.S. military transport, then returning the next day with magazines and pastries. In the Gulf region, where she spent Christmas with the young men and women engaged in the war on terrorism. In homeless shelters across Canada, listening to unwed mothers, drug addicts and

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others who had dropped out, or been left behind by society. In the first year alone, Clarkson, usually accompanied by Saul, visited 81 communities and travelled 115,000 km. They've quickened the pace since. And the two have opened Rideau Hall—they refer to it as "Canada's house"—to the public as never before, welcoming well over 200,000 visitors a year. One suspects they want to meet every living, breathing Canadian before the traditional five-year stint is up.

GREETING ME in her wood-panelled rotunda office overlooking the gardens and tennis courts on the Rideau Hall grounds, Clarkson looks impeccable—multicoloured, quilted jacket over skirt, every hair in place, lipstick expertly applied. She and Saul live in three rooms upstairs—a bedroom, living room/study and kitchenette—but downstairs she's dressed for business. And so is Canada's house. Vases of fresh flowers brighten each room, befitting her love of gardening. The walls are hung with Canadian art, representing every style and era, on loan from the National Gallery of Canada and galleries across the country. And Saul, a wine connoisseur, has amassed what he calls the country's best all-Canadian wine cellar, decreeing that nothing but Canadian vino is to be served at state functions. (He even holds blind taste tests to convince skeptics the vintages can stand up to anything the world produces.) Saul joins us mid-interview, and is soon joking that he has made it difficult for any of his successors to reverse the growth in Canada policy. "It's going to make," he says, "a very negative story."

Clarkson quickly warms to her favourite subject—Canada. She was three when her parents, William and Ethel Poy, moved to Ottawa from Hong Kong in 1942 with her and her elder brother, Neville, fleeing the Japanese invasion. Perhaps because she's an immigrant, she has an unapologetically rosy outlook on Canada as a country of infinite possibilities, and a sober view of how newcomers should adapt. "Canada has given me everything," she says. She believes in multiculturalism, but not necessarily the mushy, politically correct version that places no requirements on immigrants to become part of the Canadian experience. There's that controversial side, again, but hear her out. "I think the problem with hyphenated Canadians is the label makes others feel you're not really Canadian, and you yourself think you have a loyalty to where you come from that is bigger than the loyalty you have to Canada," she explains. One's allegiance to Canada must be paramount, she says, otherwise why are you here reaping the benefits of medicare, public education, freedom and safe streets? "I really believe you have to say, 'Now that I am Canadian, all of the country as it has always existed—the triumphs and the tragedies—is my responsibility.' If you say, 'I'm not responsible because I wasn't here, when this or that happened,' it's a perverse kind of citizenship."

She's not afraid to tackle the sensitive subject in public as well. At a Canadian Club luncheon in Ottawa in January, she spoke of how immigrants must not merely embrace their new land, but leave old quarrels in the past. And those who already call Canada home need to put aside their wariness of others. "Mistrust, contempt, fear—this is the old language," she told a packed convention hall. "And we must articulate a new language that includes trust, compassion and openness. All of us, and not only those who've been here longer."

Typical of her speeches, which she writes herself, the Canadian Club address was brimming with intelligence and infused with a passion for the land and its history. Although Anne Golden, president of the Conference Board of Canada, could not attend, a staff member sent in her place described the effect Clarkson had on her listeners. "I got a memo from this person," recalls Golden, "which she sent to all 250 people at the Conference Board, about the privilege she had of listening to Madame Clarkson and how uplifting it was for her. She was moved to tears."

That's the thing about Clarkson, adds Golden. At a time when Canadians are questioning their place in the world as a middle-range country sharing the continent with the world's sole superpower, the Governor General has become the leading public voice for what she calls "this singularly Canadian dream." It is not a sentimental vision. She's clear-eyed enough to acknowledge Canada's failings, be it homelessness, the tragedy of Aboriginal communities, poverty, or intolerance. But wherever she speaks, she leaves audiences contemplating a nation that is capable of overcoming all its difficulties. "She's so inspiring, she dispels cynicism about our country," says Golden. "And isn't that what we want our governor general to do?"

A GOVERNOR GENERAL is constitutionally the commander-in-chief of the armed forces (but like most things to do with the office, that fact would probably stump most Canadians if it were included in a game of Trivial Pursuit). Clarkson, of course, is not involved in planning military strategy. But she takes all her duties seriously, and as the vice-regal couple, Clarkson and Saul made it a point early on to visit Canada's fighting men and women overseas. She recalls that upon being installed, Chief of Defence Staff Maurice Baril inquired whether she planned to visit the troops in the field, saying that had not been a tradition. "I was a little amazed no one had done that before," she says. She paid her first visit in late 1999 to peacekeepers stationed in Kosovo, then the following year visited the peacekeepers in Bosnia. She spent the Christmas holidays aboard the frigates HMCS Montreal and HMCS Winnipeg in the Gulf region, where she presented 670 South-West Asia Medals for their work combatting terrorism, and handed out promotions to the troops. "It means so much to them to be recognized," says Clarkson, "They are out there doing a very important task for our country, and I think Canadians consider it important that I do this."

Clarkson also refuses to give short shrift to the often tedious work of handing out civilian awards, greeting Canadians at levees and other routine functions. She usually manages to speak to everyone in attendance. Aimers says he was amazed at how much time she devoted to a Monarchist League service in February 2002 in Toronto, marking the Queen's Golden Jubilee. "She stayed and stayed, talked to every single person," he says. "I found out the next morning that was the evening her father was dying. She had gone earlier to visit him, came to the service and reception, and then went back to his deathbed. She would have had every reason in the world to say, 'I can't go to the reception, my father is dying.'"

Such functions are not burdens of the office to be dispensed with quickly, says Clarkson. Rather, they are the ceremonies and rituals that bind Canadians to their society. "Many people bring developmentally handicapped children," she says, "and it's very meaningful for them to say, 'This is An, he's 32 and An has Down's syndrome and we want him to meet you.' It's astonishing, it's as though Canada has witnessed their lives, and that they are part of the larger community and recognized."

Clarkson is also clearly conscious of the symbolism of her appointment. Canada has had a female governor general before, Jeanne Sauvé (1984-1990). And, of course, before the position was nationalized with Vincent Massey in 1952, all were born abroad (sent over from London, they went back home when they were done). But she is the first immigrant to be governor general, the first to truly encompass the multi-hued nature of the population. "People, Indians, Somalis, come up to me and say, 'It's so important to us that you are there because you represent our aspirations,'" she says. "They can tell their daughter or son, 'Look, you could be this.'"

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE Saul, 55, ever confronted such self-doubts. An accomplished writer with an international reputation, Saul—who has been Clarkson's companion for over a quarter century—is comfortable in the world of ideas and is not reticent to express them. But he too has surprised his critics with the enthusiasm with which he's taken on the role of vice-regal consort, treating it like it was an official position, delivering speeches and championing causes. His actions have raised eyebrows among those who believe a governor general's spouse should be



Chrétien and Clarkson, with Saul at her side, chat after the Sept. 30, 2002, Throne Speech





The Governor General takes her duties as commander-in-chief of the armed forces seriously

'Mistrust, contempt, fear—this is the old language. We must articulate a new language that includes trust and compassion.'

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JONATHAN HAYWARD/CP ARCHIVE; FRED CHARTRAND/CP ARCHIVE; RADIVOJE PAVICIC/CP ARCHIVE

seen and not heard But Saul says his critics have not bothered to look into the tradition of the role He points out that before Confederation, Lady Elgin took an active role in Canadian affairs, including championing the benefits of modern transportation as then exemplified by railroads In the 1890s, Lady Aberdeen helped create the feminist movement and founded the National Council of Women of Canada and the Victorian Order of Nurses Her successor, Lady Minto, raised great sums for public hospitals "I'm sitting in a room where the women's movement was invented in Canada, where public hospitals were invented in Canada," he says, "so I don't feel I'm off track."

Saul's projects—which he initiated—include the LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium, which each year brings together Canada's brightest minds to debate issues of democracy, and French for the Future, which puts French immersion high school students into discussion groups with high achieving bilingual Canadians As a couple, Clarkson and Saul often expound on the civilizing influence of Aboriginal culture in Canadian history According to Saul, modern Canada is a success because it was founded on three pillars—Aboriginal, anglophone and francophone "We don't realize how that influences us, but it's there," he says The compromises that allowed the three communities to coexist and flourish, he says, seeped into the national psyche and explain why Canada, unlike many other nations, has largely avoided internal strife "The most important thing I can do is go into a hall and create a sense that, if you're a citizen, you ought to be involved in whatever way suits you LaFontaine-Baldwin, French for the Future, talking about public education, bilingualism, Aboriginal culture—all these things are ways of involving people"





From *Take 30* co-host, with Paul Soles (top) and Ed Reid in 1973 to honorary Ph.D in 2003

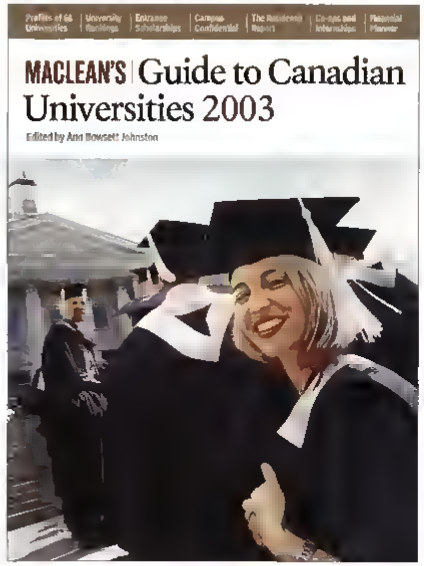
CLARKSON AND SAUL may have transformed the office of governor general, but has it transformed them? They've continued to be outspoken, but they've hardly acted like the left-wing ideologues many expected, and even dreaded, would raise hackles in the House and the country's right-wing press The difference, says Clarkson, is they've been conducting a dialogue of ideas with Canadians, while steering clear of politics "Talking about homelessness, child poverty or battered women—I don't believe that's political," she says "Show me a political party that is *for* those things."

And where is Clarkson's alleged haughtiness? Few who have met her fail to mention the humility and generosity with which she has comported herself Friends who have known her since she attended the University of Toronto's Trinity College in the 1950s say her detractors have the wrong idea about her "She's a perfectionist," says Toronto lawyer Bill McMurtry. "She sets very high standards, and she's not afraid of reaching for heights many others wouldn't even attempt"

McMurtry, who used to take Clarkson and Saul to Maple Leafs hockey games in the 1980s and early '90s, once proposed, only half in jest, that she run for politics He would be her campaign manager, he told her. She never even contemplated the offer. "I sensed there was a shyness there," he says. "She's gotten over it, but I don't think she'd much like the idea of being a political figure, which is different from being a public figure." Told the story, Clarkson breaks into laughter "You've been talking to Bill," she says, adding that she's worked at overcoming her reticence "When I was a little girl, my father took me aside and said, 'You can't be shy You've got to go out there and do things, you mustn't be shy' I've always followed what my father told me"

Her father's advice has served Her Excellency, and Canada's highest office, well "I'm a great believer in the institution, and she's given it a new dimension," says former Ontario premier Davis "She works 24 hours a day, she never stops, she's always thinking, always wondering what more she can do" Would Clarkson be willing to continue her tenure beyond the traditional term in office? She points to the portraits of her predecessors hanging on her office walls "Most of these people are separated by five years," she notes. "We started off this fast pace saying we've got five years to achieve whatever we can" As she skates around the question, it's pointed out she hasn't answered it. Clarkson laughs, but still gives no answer Even her former critics would likely say Canada could do worse than Adrienne Clarkson as the face it presents to the world Some may even grudgingly concede Canada could do no better. M

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S (TOP), CBC/CP ARCHIVE



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NO TURNING BACK?

Foreign policy experts in Washington are expressing doubts about the Bush approach, writes ARTHUR KENT



Bush with adviser Condoleezza Rice

LARRY DOWNING/REUTERS

THE BAGHDAD DAILY *Babil* couldn't restrain its joy. With the floundering U.S. and British attempts last week to push through a second UN resolution authorizing military action against Saddam Hussein, one editorial proclaimed that the allies had lost the round, "while we have won it." At week's end the majority of Security Council members openly acknowledged they would not support the resolution. But the U.S. and Britain could invade Iraq on their own: that, among other things, was on the agenda for a weekend summit in the Azores involving George W. Bush, Tony Blair and another ally, Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar Lopez of Spain. While Bush has insisted he is ready to move without the UN, Blair, facing a massive revolt inside his own Labour party over his pro-U.S. stand, desperately needs international authorization. Going into the weekend meeting, he said he wanted one more week for negotiations. But in Washington, where *Maclean's* contributing editor Arthur Kent spent the week, the die appeared to have been cast, any extensions notwithstanding—to the dismay of some foreign policy experts. Kent's report:

EVEN THE MOST stalwart White House staffers could not have held their hands over their hearts at prayer meetings this past week and sworn in good conscience that their chief deserved flattering comparisons with the presidential ghost of the moment, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It was the 70th anniversary of the first of F.D.R.'s Fireside Chats—those reassuring radio homilies that rallied the nation against the ravages of the Depression and World War II.

While Roosevelt made international affairs comprehensible to ordinary Americans, George W. Bush seems only to confuse them. Although one poll last week showed that more U.S. citizens now support action against Iraq, even without the UN's authority, the same sampling revealed that a clear majority of Americans feel the President hasn't clearly explained the justification for a preemptive attack. While F.D.R. convinced the nation to join a great world alliance against Hitler—"Our future independence is bound up with the future independence of all of our sister republics"—Bush has been turning some of America's traditional allies into opponents faster than Iraqi wrecking crews turn their al-Samouds into trash.

"We have nothing to fear but fear itself," Roosevelt famously intoned in one chat—that of May 27, 1941. If only things were that simple today, grumble a growing number of U.S. lawmakers, conservative Republicans among them. Bad enough they fear the cost of war in human, geopolitical and monetary terms, they're also deeply troubled by the Bush administration's genius for inflicting massive amounts of collateral diplomatic damage even before the first sand berm on Iraq's southern border with Kuwait has been breached.

"There's no question that this administration has been ham-handed in dealing with our allies," says Gary Schmitt, executive director of the Project for the New American Century. PNAC is not a nest of lefty critics—it's the neo-conservative think tank founded in 1997 by, among others, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, these days the brain-and-brawn trust of the Bush administration. "But what about the Europeans?" Schmitt continues. "They're preoccupied with their own social and economic programs, essentially enriching themselves while they live off the umbrella of global protection the U.S. provides."

Euro-bashing sounds more like the far right's agenda—but nothing like responsible statesmanship, according to the U.S. government's in-house adviser on diplomacy. Charles Dolan is vice-chairman of the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, a bipartisan consultancy to the President, secretary of state and Congress. He told

Maclean's: "I think the administration's messaging has been a little too belligerent and it's been counterproductive in some cases. You've got people using words like 'pygmies' to describe allies, and words like 'irrelevance' for world bodies." Dolan continued: "The name of the game of diplomacy is making friends out of enemies, not the other way around. And one of the fundamental purposes of public diplomacy is creating a positive atmosphere abroad, which in turn makes it easier for leaders in those countries to shift to our position. Through a lot of missteps, we now find ourselves going the wrong way in that respect."

For proof of those missteps, look no further than Britain's Tony Blair, the embodiment of incipient diplomatic burnout. Battling the flu, scrapping his way through a hostile Euro-hood, the prime minister could be forgiven for sometimes thinking that his best friend was at times insensitive. Bush had promised Blair and other European leaders that, prior to any invasion of Iraq, the White House would unveil a "road map for peace" between Israel and the Palestinians: mutual concessions that might lead to the creation of a Palestinian state. That road map had been bumped out of the slow lane and into the pits—to Blair's acute embarrassment. Last week, with the prime minister on the ropes, Bush suddenly revived the Mideast peace plan—perhaps a case of too little, too late for Blair.

And then there had been Donald Rumsfeld. In a classic slip of the tongue, the U.S. defense secretary said American commanders were prepared to go ahead alone should Britain balk at putting its troops at Washington's disposal. Rumsfeld backtracked, but Blair's parliamentary opponents leaped to their feet at Westminster and pummelled the hapless Blair, saying the U.S. didn't even need Britain.

"It's surprising," comments diplomatic adviser Dolan. "When this administration together with the British undertook the Afghan war, they set up coalition offices in Washington, London and Pakistan. They kept the message straight and clear, and we had 80 per cent of the world behind us. What happened? Clearly the message has become confused." And expensive and dangerous, say critics of the Bush war plan.

"The destruction and loss of life will aggravate tensions in the region," says Joseph Wilson, who as U.S. chargé d'affaires to Iraq during its occupation of Kuwait was the last U.S. diplomat to deal directly with Saddam Hussein. "And this is the wrong destination—the road to peace and stability in the Middle East goes through Jerusalem, not through Baghdad." Aside from strategic concerns, both Democratic and Republican senators complain that the administration hasn't adequately planned and budgeted for post-war peacekeeping. Estimates of war costs alone range up to $100 billion, and a $900-million price tag was put on the initial post-war phase of occupation and reconstruction, when it emerged that the administration has quietly been seeking tenders from America's elite construction giants such as Fluor Corp., Bechtel Group, Inc., and Halliburton Co., formerly headed by Vice President Cheney.



American troops get a taste of home with ice cream and pizza in the desert

'I think the Bush administration's messaging has been a little too belligerent and counterproductive'

"Let's just stop a minute and do the math," says Wilson. "Last year, America's corporations—all of our companies—earned a total of $450 billion after taxes. Can we afford a war and the costs of cleaning up afterward? Absolutely not." The nation's cloudy economic horizons bear that out: unemployment is rising and budget deficits look like flashbacks to the Bush Sr. era. For many state legislatures, the situation is worse. Lawmakers in one state within shouting distance of the White House, Maryland, are currently fretting over a proposed raft of spending cuts, tax increases—even legalizing slot machines—to counter a budget shortfall estimated to reach $2 billion by June 2004. For all the administration's chest-beating, America's war chest is draining fast.

That's not a problem, says PNAC's Schmitt, just a challenge. "You've got to compare the short-term costs with the long-term costs. The consequences of having Iraq still armed with weapons of mass destruction, that's what I call a high-cost option. The truth is that during the Cold War, we routinely spent anywhere from six to nine per cent of GDP on defence, and we still had pretty good economic growth. Now we spend between three and four per cent of GDP on defence. We clearly could spend more."

But while some U.S. pundits speak fast and loose about financing warfare, America's record for post-war reconstruction hardly glitters like gold. Even the CIA admits to the dismal reality of life in Haiti—"assisted" by U.S. forces in the last decade. Today, Haiti remains politically unstable and is still one of the Western Hemisphere's poorest countries. 80 percent of Haitians live in abject poverty. And Afghanistan, last year's model for U.S. military intervention, figured darkly last week in assessments of American reconstruction capabilities, when Amnesty International called for urgent reform of the country's police forces and western help

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to restore the rule of law. Aid specialists in the Gulf, meanwhile, warn that nowhere near enough food, water and emergency supplies have been gathered to help Iraqis displaced by war. Clare Short, Britain's international development secretary, who has threatened to resign from the Blair cabinet should war proceed without UN approval, told Parliament that no amount of delay would allow adequate preparations for the worst-case scenario of open warfare in Iraq.

Despite those warnings and America's lacklustre history in long-term foreign aid, Bush persisted with his push for a massive military onslaught. Washington observers from across the spectrum agree that two factors are at work. The first, doctrine, the second, a lack of escape routes. The vaunted Bush political machine has left itself no room for error, much less for withdrawal.

"We can't withdraw now, no way," says PNAC's Schmitt. "We'd show our friends, as well as our enemies, that we're just not serious. That'd be a failure too dangerous to think about." One seasoned member of Washington's foreign diplomatic corps agrees, but laments the inevitability of bloodshed. "This is like August of 1914. Everything appears to be moving in slow motion, but then wham!—it will all open up." Doctrinal inflexibility, he says, has left the administration trapped. "There's a powerful group of people here who have a larger vision of using war in Iraq to force change in the Middle East, to foment reform within oligarchies like Saudi Arabia, and to bring fundamentalism under control in places like Pakistan."

Leaders of America's Muslim community scoff at that strategy. "They say there's going to be Jeffersonian democracy, that people will dance in the streets when Saddam Hussein is gone," says Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "But there's going to be tremendous bloodletting and revenge by all the people who've suffered under the regime. And if you really have democracy in Iraq, you'll get a Shia government. Is America going to say, 'Let's have a Shia government in Iraq that can ally itself to Iran?' They'll never let that happen. They'll make sure some crony gets in—another strongman who'll do what America wants him to do."

'Iraq is the wrong destination—the road to peace in the Middle East goes through Jerusalem, not through Baghdad'

But the fact that Iraq's post-war leadership is still just a glimmer in the President's eye isn't dissuading him. An eerie sense of mission weighs heavily in his voice, it was Roosevelt who pioneered the presidential use of religious overtones, but Bush adds an unwavering—some say blind—conviction to his speeches. "This is his moment—this is his Omaha Beach," a close friend, Craig Stapleton, America's ambassador to the Czech Republic, told the *Washington Post* last week.

In contrast, many statesmen and soldiers are by nature uncomfortable with such zeal. How many times in history have leaders set off in search of an Omaha Beach, only to find themselves in Mogadishu instead? This was precisely the point raised this week by Col. Mike Turner, who was Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf's briefing officer in the 1991 Gulf War. Turner cautions that a weaker coalition, operating on a much more treacherous battlefield, makes the planned assault on Iraq look much less like Desert Storm and more like the situation prior to the disastrous U.S. operation in Somalia, depicted in the film *Black Hawk Down*.

What is Canada to do faced with all of this? Like much of the rest of the world, that's a policy work in progress. "The PM is still undecided as to what Canada might contribute militarily," says one Canadian diplomat in the U.S. capital. "There's a determination to concentrate on what we do best, which is to maintain multilateralism, encourage democracy and support reconstruction." For democracy and reconstruction, read Iraq. multilateralism means helping to pick up the pieces of decades' worth of painstaking effort in creating international alliances. If its Iraq campaign goes badly wrong, the U.S. will need emergency relief of its own, nothing short of a diplomatic Marshall Plan to regain a measure of credibility and trust abroad.

Invading Iraq against the explicit warnings of the UN secretary general and some members of the Security Council amounts to something a long way from George W. Bush's vision of an Omaha Beach in the Middle East. It's an immense gamble, one that history may eventually regard as America's own diplomatic day of infamy. M



DAN © GUTTENFELDER/AP

Until the bombs start falling, sandbag bunkers double as soccer nets

'WHY DO THEWANT TO DO THIS AGAIN?'

Don Murray finds the beleagd citizens of Baghdad reluctantly preparing for war

AN OLD WOMAN sat on a bed in a modest house in a residential district of Baghdad. Lemons were ripening on trees in her small garden. Across the street stood the al-Amanya shelter, hit by American cruise missiles in the Gulf War on Feb. 13, 1991—408 people, almost all of them women and children, died. One of them was the old woman's daughter, Shaima, 18. The Americans thought the shelter housed an Iraqi command-and-control centre. Shaima had gone with her brother Achmed to sleep in the shelter because she couldn't stand the noise of missiles and anti-aircraft fire.

Achmed was one of only 16 people to survive the attack. He is a man of 28 now, a man traumatized by that night, a man who cannot sleep and cannot work, a man who said, "of course I hate the Americans." On the bed, his mother, Amina, was grey and ill with diabetes. She was not angry but puzzled. Why, she asked several times, "do they want to do this to us again? I don't understand, can you tell me?"

It's a question many residents of the Iraqi capital were asking last week. The pretense of life as normal and business as usual was finally collapsing as events gathered pace in New York City and Washington. Suddenly piled-up sandbags began appearing on street corners. People whispered that ministers and senior officials had sent their families abroad. The rich had left before the border with Jordan was closed to Iraqi citizens. The less rich and less lucky lined up at passport offices, hoping to pay the necessary bribes to get the document that might take them to Syria and out of harm's way.

Some sold their houses and their furniture to find the money for the bribes and the safe sojourn in a quiet neighbouring country. Others were torn. "I have four shops, and I could go," said one businessman. "But my mother is 84 years old, and I can't leave her, so instead I will stay in my house, and dig my well."

In the past few weeks the government had sent squads to dig new neighbourhood wells, complete with generator-operated pumps, in many areas of this city of five million people. The call to dig wells in backyards, along with family trenches, came from Saddam Hussein himself and, as the threat of war loomed larger, many began shovelling.

In residential areas, officials of the ruling Baath party distributed weapons to party members. Street monitors were appointed and orders given to enforce a strict curfew, if war broke out, by shooting on sight. Some said that order was aimed less at an external invader but at the potential enemy behind the lines: the restive poor who had already risen up and rioted once in Saddam City, the vast suburb where raw sewage runs in open ditches. The uprising there took place after the Gulf War in 1991. It was brutally put down.

There were signs of military preparations. At Baghdad's central bus station, men in uniform seemed to constitute half the crowd of travellers. The regime had issued a special call to reservists aged 30 to 34 to rejoin their units. And so, they were taking buses north and south, to their staging units. Some paused to get their boots shined by soldiers of another large army in the capital, the boys and men who patrol the city with their shoeshine kits, ready to polish for 10 cents a pair.

In front of the old, battered buses, men shouted the names of cities and towns. "Mosul, ready for Mosul.... Tikrit, Tikrit." The buses only left when they were full, and the criers were having trouble finding customers. "People don't want to travel now, especially to the north," one said. "People are scared. They worry about war. Only the soldiers are travelling."

Driving out of Baghdad you could see tanks sitting on railway cars at the gates to the city. These were old and small Soviet models from the 1950s and 1960s. In the open terrain, some field guns were positioned. Great trenches dug at the edge of Baghdad were filled with oil. One day, a vast curtain of oily smoke rose and hung over the horizon. The Iraqis were apparently testing their newest defence. They had set fire to the oil in one of the trenches, they hoped the smoke would disrupt the trajectory of incoming laser-guided missiles.

And yet many people tried to cling to



Women taking advantage of increased rations haul extra food home in Saddam City

the belief that war was a cloud that would evaporate. The al-Baghdadi café was full every evening last week. Here men came to play, drink tea, and smoke from water pipes called *argile* in Iraq. The game of choice was dominoes. The riverfront café was filled with the clacking of counters on tables and the shouts of victory and defeat. Mahmoud Shaki and his three friends came almost every night. They were men in their late 30s and had been playing dominoes together for more than 25 years. Mahmoud had studied computer science at university but now was happy to have found work in a little grocery store to support his family. "What can we do?" he asked. "We have been through two wars and we'll have to get through another one if it comes. In the meantime, there's nothing else to do but play dominoes. We'll try to play through the next one."

That may be difficult—across the river from the al-Baghdadi café stands one of Saddam's immense palaces, a likely target of American missiles and bombs. UN economic sanctions have hurt. Sadoun Street is tattered now but in the 1970s it glittered with cafés, theatres and cinemas. Many of the cinema houses are closed or converted, one of the casualties of the sanctions was the importing of first-run films. But people still come to the theatres. "The only thing people want to see are comedies," one woman said. "They want to laugh and they want to forget about what they are facing."

'I fear for my country,' one Iraqi said. 'But I don't fear death for myself—because I have seen death before my very eyes.'

And so they went to *I've Seen It With My Own Eyes*. This was the most popular comedy in Baghdad and had been for more than three years. Every night of the week people streamed to the Al Nasr (Victory) theatre—families, and young men in groups. The families sat in the centre aisles, the young men together in the side aisles.

What took place on stage was hardly a play, and more a series of loosely connected vaudeville sketches. The plot concerned two down-at-the-heel Iraqis kidnapped by aliens. The aliens are concerned for the Iraqis' welfare and want to warn them about a dangerous superpower that is preparing to start a nuclear war. The political commentary was hardly subtle.

The social commentary was more interesting. One of the protagonists is unemployed, the other is a public drunk, this in a city where the regime banned the public consumption of alcohol in the mid-nineties to help shore up relations with the Islamic establishment. "What do you think you're drinking," the drunk's wife asks. "This isn't 1975. That isn't oil. Do you know what year it is?" He answers, "Of course I know. It's 2003, everybody is drinking now." Money, or lack of it, was also a constant theme. "Why would any woman want to marry him?" one character asks. "He doesn't have any ration tickets."

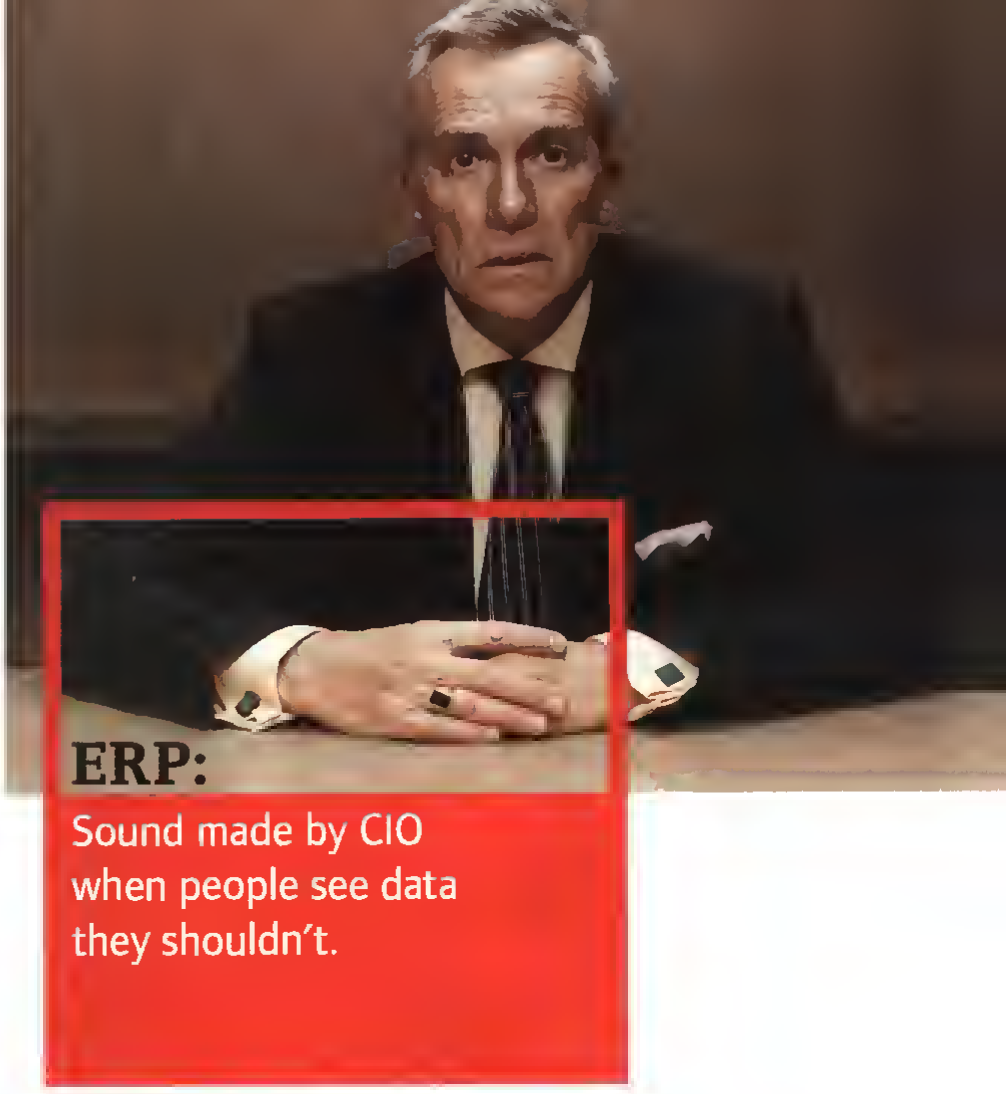
The stifling bureaucracy of the regime was another target. A desperate resident of the south of the country phones Baghdad, pleading for help. Sewage has blocked the pipes in his neighbourhood and is flowing into houses. Baghdad laughs and suavely promises help. But there are forms to fill, rules to follow. The calls become more desperate, the voice of the resident more strangled as the sewage rises to his chin. Help never arrives. But a file has been opened.

This four-hour show was regularly punctuated by explosions of laughter and applause. The audience pounced on any joke, willing itself to laugh and forget. The largest laugh came toward the end, when one character turned to another and said, shrugging, "The other Arab leaders won't help us. They're too busy to worry about our problems." There was another roar of laughter, this time tinged with bitterness, once again the Iraqis know they are alone.

THE AL-AMARIYA bomb shelter stands in the middle of a residential neighbourhood. Children walk by it on their way home from school. It is a memorial now, the gaping hole carefully preserved where the missile ripped through the roof as if it was no more than the lid on a tin can. Inside, in the vast room of twisted metal and scorched concrete, are the photos of the dead, almost all children staring solemnly at the camera. Outside are their graves, in a special cemetery.

As Iraqis reluctantly prepared for another war, the shelter stood as a grim warning. Everyone I talked to said they would not seek refuge from bombs in such a shelter this time. It might become their tomb. From his parents' garden with its lemon trees, Achmed can see the shelter where his life was shattered on that night in 1991. "I fear war but I'm not afraid," he said. "The tragedy will happen again and I fear for my country. But I'm not afraid for myself, I don't fear death for myself, because I have seen death before my very eyes."

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SURVIVAL OF THE MOST SPIRITED

Adversity formed them. But can Acadians continue to avoid assimilation?

NEW BRUNSWICK'S French-speaking Acadian peninsula is a thinly populated corner of Canada. But even on a bleak Tuesday night with a hard rain and thick fog obscuring the distinctive, brightly painted houses that dot the landscape, signs of life are easy to find. In the town of Tracadie-Sheila (pronounced *Shyla*), locals are waiting for Karaoke Night to heat up at the Deauville, a bar that doesn't empty out until 4:00 many mornings. Others nearby sit talking car to car—their engines still idling—in the parking lot in front of a bustling restaurant nearby. Over at L'Abat (The Strike), a bowling alley at the east end of town, about 60 have come out to the *salon de quilles*. They haul on long necked beer bottles, laugh, talk, even roll the occasional ball down one of the 12 lanes. "I dunno," says Shirley LeBreton, spraying disinfectant into a pair of size 10 shoes behind the service counter, when asked why every Acadian hamlet and village seems to have its own bowling alley (L'Abat is home to 140 teams). "It's easy. It's fun. And, you know, we like a good time."

Welcome to the heartland of *l'Acadie*, home of a distinctive, nearly 400-year-old French culture. People here can trace their language, raucous music and hearty food to settlers from Poitou and Brittany who began arriving in the New World in the early 17th century. Today, 242,000 French-speakers live in New Brunswick, some 60,000 of them on the peninsula that stretches 200 km along the province's eastern coastline from Neguac in the south, up to Miscou Island, then around the northern shore to Bathurst. A further 40,000 Acadians live elsewhere in Atlantic Canada. They've been the inspiration for *La Sagouine*—Antonine Maillet's play about a resigned, resilient washerwoman of the same name—and *Evangeline*, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous epic about a pair of doomed lovers.

> 'I don't recall a period where we were ever as strong as we are today. I sense an element of confidence not there 40 years ago.'

They're fictional characters, but their story plays out against a backdrop of real-life events: the poem's couple is separated when the English order the expulsion of all 13,000 of Nova Scotia's French-speaking population in 1755. Acadians were hunted down and shipped thousands of kilometres away to France and the United States. Some managed to escape the British soldiers, hiding in the forests of the province's interior. Others fled to the French islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, while still others took refuge in New Brunswick, along the Restigouche and Miramichi rivers and along the shores of the Bay of Chaleur. In the late 1700s, those in New Brunswick were joined by Acadians who had managed to return from exile. In a hostile, English-dominated world, an isolated finger of land jutting into the Gulf of St. Lawrence seemed their best hope for survival.

With time those settlements grew and thrived. But the memory of the Grand Dérangement—as the diaspora came to be known—dies slowly among a people haunted by history. Last June, Acadians petitioned Queen Elizabeth II to acknowledge that long-ago outrage in October while on the New Brunswick leg of her Golden Jubilee tour of Canada. They were unsuccessful. But anyone



George H. Craig's 1893 painting of the deportation; 'We like a good time,' says LeBreton as she explains the regional popularity of bowling

MUSÉE ACADIEN DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE MACNEIL



Saulnier's Tracadie-Sheila-area parishioners make church and family the centre of life



expecting to find a society driven only by a deep sense of grievance should look elsewhere. The peninsula brims with the kind of spirit that has allowed its people to survive no matter what life throws their way. Raymond Losier, Tracadie-Sheila's long-time mayor, has never regretted returning to his birthplace after attending the University of Moncton 35 years ago. "Everything's larger than life," says the 66-year-old former school principal. "If you've got a job, there's no better place in the world to live."

"If" being the operative word in a place seemingly at another historical crossroads. Losier, in fact, has touched on the essential Acadian quandary—jobs are hard to come by. The winter unemployment rate routinely tops 40 per cent among the residents, descendants of the early Acadians who avoided expulsion or returned from exile. In most cases, they returned to harder country, less suited to farming than the land they had expropriated. It's still a hard place—many of the ambitious leave the northeastern end of New Brunswick to attend university or take jobs elsewhere. Most never return. Mylène Arseneau, a Grade 12 student at W. A. Losier Polyvalente in Tracadie-Sheila, is typical: she plans to move to Ontario later this year to study to become a veterinary assistant. "I want to see other places," says the 17-year-old. "There just aren't many opportunities here." Others who leave prefer to stay in places like Dieppe, a booming, largely French speaking satellite of Moncton, 250 km south of Tracadie-Sheila.

The upshot: the school's student population has decreased by nearly one third since 1994. That decline—the result also, in part, of families being much smaller than in the past—is a dramatic version of what is happening elsewhere on the peninsula. Caraquet, for instance, the self-proclaimed cultural capital of *l'Acadie*, had a population of 4,653 in 2001—211 fewer than five years earlier. The region, like many rural parts of Atlantic Canada, is stagnating.

The New Brunswick government has poured $20 million into the area in the past four years to improve its prospects. The province wants to diversify the local economy into manufacturing, tourism and high-tech. But luring innovative, forward-looking businesses to such an out of the way spot can be a hard sell. "It's going to take 10 years [to turn things around]," acknowledges Tory Premier Bernard Lord. "I'd love to be able to do it in two. But we have to be realistic, and these things take time."

Still, the time *has* come for a number of Acadians. The community can brag about vibrant Acadian-owned businesses. Moncton-based Assumption Life, a 100-year-old financial institution, has grown to the point where it now has $2 billion in assets under management. Their political clout is increasing, thanks to the 14 Acadian MLAs in the province's 44-person Tory caucus. Most of all, they can feel good about those who have pulled themselves up by their bootstraps. Take Bruno Godin, the son of illiterate parents who is now managing editor of *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, a French-language daily based in Caraquet. "It's amazing," he says, "how much progress we've made in just a generation."

Success hasn't been easy. The Acadians had to weather Leonard Jones, who, as mayor of Moncton, imposed English-only policies in the late 1960s and early '70s. They also had to wait out the anti-French Confederation of Regions party, New Brunswick's official Opposition in the early 1990s, before it imploded. But they could also thank Louis Robichaud, the province's first elected Acadian premier, who, in the 1960s, improved schools and services for marginalized communities and made New Brunswick Canada's first, and still only, officially bilingual province.

More recently, Lord has pushed linguistic reforms guaranteeing French-speaking residents more rights and powers. The measures also ensure Acadians are entitled to attend French-speaking schools and receive health care in their native language. No wonder Donald Savoie, an Acadian economist at the University of Moncton, who is also one of the province's leading thinkers and writers, is enthusiastic. "I don't recall a period where we were ever as strong as we are today," he says. "I sense an element of confidence in Acadians not there 40 years ago."

But for those who leave for success in the wider world there's a downside. Can upwardly mobile Acadians hold onto their language and culture in bigger, English-dominated centres, watching Jerry Springer on television, reading English newspapers, often living with a spouse who can only *parler* a couple of words in French? The experience of their distant relatives in the United States makes many wonder. The English-ordered expulsion for refusing to pledge allegiance to the British Crown left many of the 10,000 exiles scattered around North America and Europe. Louisiana, where they first landed in 1765, was arguably the only place where they were truly welcomed. Today, an estimated one million Americans—still mostly in Louisiana—can claim Acadian ancestry. But the language is dying, and even the hardy Cajun culture seems to be disappearing into the American melting pot.

Acadia | >





A local booster, Mayor Losier says 'there's no better place in the world to live'

So far, New Brunswick's Acadians have largely been able to withstand the forces of assimilation. In the province, just 20,000, or eight per cent of those who list French as their mother tongue, no longer speak it in the home. But in Nova Scotia, where the descendants of those French speakers who hid in the woods to avoid the soldiers or returned from exile on condition of swearing allegiance to the English monarch now live, the numbers of those losing their language have grown to 45 from 31 per cent since 1971. Acadians know where that can lead—they've already witnessed what happened to the village of West Chezzetcook, N.S. A century ago, nearly 1,000 Acadians lived nestled between the salt marshes and the Atlantic Ocean on the province's eastern shore. Today, even though some cultural events draw crowds, few in the village still speak French. "It's sad," says Judy Bellefontaine, a volunteer at the tiny Acadia House Museum, who also has Acadian roots. "Especially when you hear people speaking in a derogatory way about French when they don't know they're Acadian themselves. It's heartbreaking."

For now, at least, the old ways are still treasured on the Acadian peninsula, where each summer thousands crowd the local festivals. "Around here, we know who we are," declares Father Zoël Saulnier, a 69-year-old Catholic priest from Tracadie-Sheila. "We're

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE MACNEIL

SHE MAY NOT

WALK ON WATER,

BUT...



The work of this researcher may well produce miracles. (And heaven knows, we could all use a few.) How about a planet with pristine lakes and rivers, for example? Or a secure supply of clean, safe drinking water? Thanks to research conducted by scientists and engineers from across Canada, this might not take divine intervention.

Internationally recognized environmental scientist Dr. Michèle Prévost focuses her research on water treatment and distribution systems, from the source to the tap. As NSERC Industrial Research Chair on Drinking Water at Montreal's École Polytechnique, she's helping the water industry optimize purification procedures, such as disinfection, filtration and high-speed decantation.

Of the 10,000 university scientists and engineers whose research is funded by NSERC (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council), here are just a few of the many others who are getting their feet wet on research related to water quality:

Susan Andrews (University of Waterloo) / Jean-François Blais (Université du Québec, INRS-Eau) / Christian Bouchard (University Laval) / Chandanda Chinnappa (University of Calgary) / Graham Gagnon (Dalhousie University) / Susan Gaskin (McGill University) / Paul Horgen (University of Toronto) / Steve Hrudey (University of Alberta) / Patat Laavitt (University of Regina) / Paul Lessard (Université Laval) / Asit Masumdar (University of Victoria) / James Ricell (McGill University) / Jan Olaszkiewicz (University of Manitoba) / Pierre Payment (Université du Québec, INRS-IAF) / John Smol (Queen's University) / Jiaqiang Wu (Ryerson University)

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secure in our Acadian identities." He says that means continuing to make church and the family the centre of life. It means speaking a language which in many parts of the province still sounds little different from the speech in Poitou and Brittany where their ancestors were born. (One notable exception is the Moncton area, where a French-English patois known as *chiac* is commonly spoken.) Acadian singers and musical groups are popular in the outside world. Time-honoured traditions like rug hooking and folk art continue to enjoy a loyal following. And Acadians—with some justification—are steadfast in their belief that they simply have more fun than their staid, stolid Anglo neighbors.

But the question is, for how much longer can they hold onto those things that make them Acadian? Musical artists, like Prince Edward Island's traditional song-and-dance group Barachois, worry about what will happen once fashions change at folk festivals. Intellectuals like Herménégilde Chiasson, a writer, painter, photographer and filmmaker from Caraquet who won the 1999 Governor General's Award for poetry, fear that the community's artists and thinkers may have lost their fizz now that they no longer have to prove their culture's legitimacy. "We're in the midst of a crisis of ideas," he declares. "Where are the writers, the groundbreaking essays, novels and movie scripts? When we had to fight for recognition there was more tension. And when there's tension, there's energy."

Alarmist? Perhaps not for a people waging a four century battle for survival, who have gradually seen pieces of their life and culture disappear. Consider their food. The newer generation still knows how to make the old-style, stick-to-your-ribs Acadian dishes like cod and potatoes and blood pudding. But even in Acadian strongholds like Tracadie-Sheila, culinary trends eventually change. Ask where a visitor can go for some regional delicacies and locals will direct you to La Crêpe Bretonne, a restaurant in Paquetville, 30 km away. "We serve Acadian food once a week," says Edouard Theriault. "There just doesn't seem to be the demand." True, people want low-fat meals these days. But it's still a metaphor for a society stubbornly trying to keep its way of life in fact as the rest of the world closes in.

With Becky Harris



THE RIDE GETS WORSE

These turbulent times mean investors must play safe—and avoid U.S. dollars

AS ONE WHO flies weekly, I have accumulated considerable airline miles and considerable experience with rough flying. This is written on my bumpiest flight in months, so the experience does tend to concentrate the mind on the effects of turbulence.

We are living in turbulent times. That is so obvious as to seem banal, but it is, in truth, a relatively recent phenomenon. The last two decades of the last millennium were—or seemed to be—mostly calm, mostly prosperous and mostly progressive. The world got rid of Communism peacefully in Europe and Russia, recessions were mild by the standards of the 1970s, the really hideous war-related killing fields were in places like Rwanda or Kosovo that most people couldn't find on the map, inflation went from being scary to being barely noticeable, and we revelled in the most magnificent equity bull market of all time.

In retrospect, those Rabelaisian celebrations of the new millennium were the equivalent of turkeys celebrating an early Christmas. Since the years began with a zero, they have given near-zero cause for rejoicing. The only benign trend of the Reagan era that has continued has been the decline in inflation (with its attendant decline in interest rates to levels that would have seemed Utopian in the 1980s).

The list of the lousy is long.

1. A weak global economy in which Canada is the star performer—too small to offset the dead weights of Japan, Germany, France, Italy et al., and the strain of a deeply stressed United States.

2. A crash in technology and telecom stocks that eventually engulfed most of the rest of the equity markets.

3. A War on Terror that began with the terrible events of 9/11 and then spread to many parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bali, Morocco and the Philippines.

4. A breakdown in the international order. The first of the post-Second World War structures to be grievously wounded was NATO, as France successfully made opposition to the U.S. the litmus test of acceptable behaviour for would-be members of the European Union. Next came the UN, which was forced to the edge of irrelevance as the France-U.S. clash became the first truly global confrontation since the end of the Cold War. (It didn't help that, when that clash reached crisis stage, the head of the UN Commission on Human Rights was Libya, and Iraq was due to take its turn as chair of the 66-nation, UN-sponsored Conference on Disarmament.)

5. War looms in Iraq, while North Korea threatens to build and use nuclear weapons. In response, stock markets fall anew, led by a plunge in Japan to a 20-year low.

6. A breakdown in civility spreads across Western nations. Anti-Americanism and anti-Israelism gain ground by the day, triggering a backlash within the U.S., still suffering from the after effects of 9/11 on its national psyche. Even Canada is infected, as prominent persons call the U.S. president (a graduate of Yale and Harvard) "a moron," denounce Americans as "bastards," and get enthusiastic support on phone-in shows. (Since a third or so of Americans are black, brown, yellow or Latino, this outburst means that a Canadian politician is including such protected groups in the category of "bastards" worthy of hate by the liberally enlightened. A human rights investigation will, one trusts, compel the public hater to restrict the American hateful to whites.)

So what does this seemingly endless flow of bad news mean for investors?

It means the overall level of market risk has risen sharply from the historically low level of the 1990s. That means portfolios need greater exposure to high-grade bonds, the bluest of blue-chip stocks and gold than was appropriate when the geopolitical news was mostly appealing, and the mostly lovely news in the financial markets was being airbrushed to perfection by skilful accountants, while the ugly news was being Botoxed to beauty by other skilful accountants.

It means up-front, reliable income in the form of dividends or trust payouts is worth more to investors than visions of massive capital gains in some glorious future.

It means investors must limit their exposure to the U.S. dollar, which is in a major bear market. Most of the greenback's bull market in the 1990s came from the perceptions that the U.S. was the sole hegemon, with the best economy, the best stock market and the best accounting. Now that the U.S. is having trouble lining up friends in its hour of need, while its economy is struggling and the idiocy of Nasdaq and the gross inadequacies in its accounting have been revealed, investors can no longer overlook the frightening statistics of the U.S. current account. Each day, the U.S. goes deeper in debt to foreigners, to the tune of more than US$1.5 billion, mostly because of the rapidly deteriorating trade account. That monstrous deficit is made up by drawing down savings from across the world—more than three-quarters of all cross-border savings transactions.

At some point, foreigners will decide they hold enough dollar assets. Indeed, if foreign holders of U.S. stocks and Eurodollars start to become infected with rabid anti-Americanism like their elites, politicians, and local leftists, there would be a run on the dollar of historic—and potentially cataclysmic—proportions. Now is no time for a Canadian to buy Florida real estate. Its price in loonies—and euros—is heading down.

Finally, it means diversifying globally. The economic balance of power is shifting away from the U.S. to China and other mainland Asian countries, at a time when U.S. stocks are still valued at more than all the other publicly traded stocks in the world. This will be a decade in which the relative market value of American stocks slides toward the U.S. proportion of global GDP—roughly 21 per cent.

This decade won't be fun, like the last. But it's the only one we've got.

Now is no time for a Canadian to buy Florida real estate. Its price in loonies—and euros—is heading down.

Donald Coxe is chairman of Harris Investment Management in Chicago and of Toronto-based Jones Heward Investments. dcoxe@macleans.ca

'IT'S LIKE BEING IN LOVE'

One of the world's great writers reflects on his art—and his life

FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS, Alistair MacLeod's reputation as an all-but anonymous literary master was built around two slim short story collections about his beloved Cape Breton. But his first novel, *No Great Mischief*, published in 1999 when he was 64, changed all that. Critics swooned over the work, which is also about the island where MacLeod grew up and the beauty, pathos and despair of the people who live there. The book has been translated into 14 languages and has won a host of awards, including the prestigious IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, the richest prize in literature. He spoke to *Maclean's* Atlantic Bureau Chief John DeMont from his office at the University of Windsor, which he has kept since his retirement in 2001 as a professor of creative writing and English literature.

McClelland & Stewart president and publisher Douglas Gibson has said that were it not for his persistence and a bottle of single malt Scotch *No Great Mischief* would never have seen the light of day. Is that true?

[Laughs] It's partially true. Doug was just raking it more seriously than I was. I had a sabbatical that year and I had been promising the novel to him for seven or eight years or longer. And he said we would have it for the fall. My understanding was I would complete it for the fall. He understood it to mean that he could have it on the bookshelves in the fall. The famous story is that he kept calling up. He hadn't seen it and he was getting more and more nervous. We'd worked together for a long time. So I guess he had faith. But eventually he did come down to Windsor with this bottle of whisky which I never drank. I had all the manuscript in various typefaces and a lot of it was still in longhand. I said, "What should I do with this?" He said, "Just give it to me." So I just gave him what I had. We had quite a breathless race in mid-July. I would write 12 pages or so longhand and then courier it to him.

If he hadn't been so persistent it would have been even longer getting done. So I owe him a debt of gratitude. The fact that the book has done so well is due to his Scottish perseverance and my Scottish dilly-dallying. It just shows there is room for all kinds of Scots in the world.

Would you still be holding on to the manuscript today had he not showed up?

Oh no, I'm very glad it's over. I'd had 10 years of carting it around in my briefcase. I'm slow but I'm not that slow. I had to work the writing in around raising six children and going to kids' basketball games and my full-time responsibilities at the university. Usually I'd work at it during the summer in Cape Breton and then take it out at Christmas again. I've tried to write for two hours a day no matter what. But that's so hard to do. I told my wife it's one thing to fall asleep reading a book, another to fall asleep writing one.

I was very satisfied with it. If sometimes it takes a long time to do things, that doesn't matter as long as you don't die in the middle of it. They don't ask how long it took to write *Wuthering Heights*.

Has the novel's success surprised you?

Well, I started writing the short stories 40 years ago. So I've been out there. When Michael Ondaatje and I read at Stanford University a couple of springs ago, he introduced me by saying that for a long time the readers of Alistair MacLeod were like Druids worshipping a tree. I guess now I've become a more contemporary religion.

The book tours can be hard work. But I don't mind them. In high schools, if you're a writer they tend to blend you in with the Bible and Shakespeare. So if people want to come out and talk to the author then it's nice there are a few of us alive and walking around. Now and then someone calls me Alistair MacLean, author of *No Little Mischief*, but for the most part it has been very positive.

What do you think people respond to in the book?

It's gone over well in France and Germany and Spain and on and on in Europe. Scottish readers have been very good to me. French Canadians seem to like the fact that it's about a certain type of people who have been in a landscape for a long time. What I tried to do was write about certain people in a certain place. I am not an autobiographical writer—I don't write about my neighbours or literal grandparents. But you try to make things as realistic as you can. If you do your best in trying to create art, hopefully it does reach out to people.

People find different things in it. In Memphis, a woman said to me it was the best description she'd ever read about what it's like to be an orphan. Some people seem very interested in the immigrant experience. In Europe they like it because deep in their hearts they are afraid of globalization. It's like a lot of Cape Bretoners, who are driven by economic reasons to go to places even though this may not be where their hearts are. Maybe for the Italians to have all that history and art, then just to be globalized and lumped together with everyone else, watching CNN and eating at McDonald's, is not what they want.

Why is sense of place so important to you as a writer?

All literature is regional. The Bible is regional in that it deals with sheep and goats and the Sea of Galilee. All literature comes from someplace, and people will understand that. When I was sitting down writing in my little cabin in Cape Breton, I wasn't saying, I bet the Albanians will love this, or, this sentence is for the Turks. You hope that it works in the same way that if you write beautiful music people will respond to it. This is the way most writers are. They have their own place and material. Mordecai Richler had those few streets in Montreal. Alice Munro has southwestern Ontario. Guy Vanderhaeghe works with the Prairies. It's like being in love, you say, this is the material with which I want to spend my time.



Do you ever think you should have been writing novels and short stories instead of all those years teaching?

No, I've always enjoyed the teaching. One year my writing royalties were $11. I have no regrets at all. I'm not formally teaching now. But I still have an office at the university; it's a good place to work. I think they let me stay here because it's so messy they're worried I'll never clean it up.

What are your work habits like now?

I like to get up in the morning and work for 2½ or three hours. That's when I do my best work. After a couple of hours I just can't bear to do it any more. I guess I find it emotionally wrenching. I write until I can't stand it any more, then I go away. When I'm in Cape Breton I write in a little cabin near our home in Dunvegan. I just sit on my little chair with my pad and pen. I write longhand on those legal pads on every second line. Sometimes I use exam books from the university. If I was to write it on a computer it would feel as if the fairies wrote it. When I press my ballpoint pen into the legal pad, I know it's me.

You've spent 34 years in Windsor. Is Cape Breton still an important part of your life?

We have the house in Cape Breton, in Dunvegan, and a daughter teaching music nearby in Belle Côte. My wife and I are both from the same community. There are lots of family connections.

What are you writing now?

I'm just thinking about some short stories. Don't tell Doug Gibson.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

IN FROM THE COLD

A Toronto physicist's once-ridiculed theory gains acceptance



Moffat saw others celebrated for his novel idea that the speed of light is variable

TORONTO PHYSICIST John Moffat, who has made a career of questioning the cosmos, faces a vexing question himself. Does he feel vindicated, people ask, now that his controversial theory about the speed of light is finally getting the recognition it deserves? The soft-spoken, 70-year-old Moffat might answer with a resounding "yes," if not for a painful irony—while publicity is shining on his theory, the media are lavishing credit on another scientist.

Since 1991, Moffat has championed the notion that light—remarkable for its constant velocity—was travelling much faster just after the big bang created the universe. His theory violates Albert Einstein's universal speed limit. Nothing, Einstein decreed, could ever travel faster that the constant speed of light, not even light itself. Backed by decades of evidence that supported Einstein, Moffat's peers greeted his thoughts with sighs and sneers. Having found a publisher for his ridiculed thesis in 1993—a little-known journal, the *International Journal of Modern Physics*—he retired from the University of Toronto in the faint afterglow of this achievement.

Then in 1998, two brash, well-connected upstarts from London's Imperial College published virtually the same idea, in *Physical Review*, a far more prestigious publication. After their own battle with what they call "fossilized" academics and "moronic" journal editors, Andreas Albrecht and Joao Magueijo supercharged their careers with the "varying speed of light," or VSL, theory that Moffat conceived seven years earlier. The presence of a faster speed of light in the early universe may explain many cosmic mysteries, such as how the universe seems so homogeneous from one end to the other.

No one disputes Moffat's primacy in VSL's conception, or that its subsequent resurrection by Magueijo and Albrecht happened independently. Magueijo even devotes most of a chapter of his new book, *Faster Than the Speed of Light*, to Moffat and the controversy that generated a disclaimer crediting Moffat in a second version of Magueijo's original paper.

That effort to bring Moffat back into the picture has attracted admiration. "Joao Magueijo has probably done far more to recognize John than other researchers would have," says Acadia University physicist and Moffat collaborator Michael Clayton of Wolfville, N.S. Publication may secure partial recognition for an idea, he adds, but "it seems like you still have to sell it. If you don't make noise, people either will not know that your work exists or ignore it."

Even in pure science, PR counts. The way to secure credit for a new concept, says one lawyer, is to publish—and promote.

Toronto intellectual property lawyer James Holloway agrees. "The best thing one can do to secure ultimate credit for work of value is to publish—and promote." The PR machine behind 35-year-old Magueijo, particularly, has packaged a man variously described by reporters as scholarly, roguish, rebellious, revolutionary and "ridiculously handsome." "The heir apparent to Einstein's kingdom looks like a Gap ad," writes Toronto journalist Mary Rogan in *Seed* magazine. She calls Magueijo "a dead ringer for Joey on *Friends*, only better because he's not a moron." Asks *Publishers Weekly*: "Could Einstein be wrong and Magueijo right?"

Magueijo may not always feel obliged by an onus to correct oversights, either. Moffat says he was perturbed that, in a recent CBC interview, Magueijo "remarkably made no mention of my discovery of VSL." In an irony among ironies, however, Magueijo and Moffat may be the best things that ever happened to one another. If, against the odds, two smart scientific rebels independently conceive—and champion—a hopeless idea, then maybe, just maybe, there is hope for it after all.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

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ANATOMY OF A VERDICT

Executive Editor MICHAEL BENEDICT finds himself on a jury, as foreman

TEARS well in the eyes of the 34-year-old part-time nurse as she squirms in the witness box. She pauses, sips from a glass of water, looks down, and continues her story of how she was sexually assaulted by a fellow immigrant from her home country. I sit just two metres away, fighting back tears of sympathy.

Only minutes earlier on this Tuesday, I was sipping a coffee, reading a newspaper, my thoughts with faraway people and places. Now, I am Juror Number 4, sitting with 11 others I have never met before, all of us sworn to decide fairly the fate of a man charged with five counts of sexual assault, unlawful confinement and extortion.

MY JOURNEY to Ontario Superior Court Room 2-4 in downtown Toronto begins with a summons in the mail from the sheriff, ordering me to report on a Monday morning at 8:30. More than 400 of us gather at the courthouse to watch an instructional video, and then to wait and see if we will be called to do our civic duty. From friends, I learn that most of us will likely report every day that week, hang around and never make it into a courtroom. We might even be part of group called to a criminal or civil trial, but not have our names picked randomly as a potential jury member. Others might have their names called out, only to be rejected by either the Crown or the defence. If we are not chosen after a week, we are dismissed.

Figuring my chance of not being called is pretty good, I look forward to catching up on some reading. But I am prepared to serve, hoping that, if I am selected, the case will take me away from work for no more than two or three days—and not involve anything unpleasant. Right?

We are encouraged that first morning to come forward and explain why jury duty might impose an undue hardship. Many with child care or health issues, jobs that will not pay them while they are away or who are self-employed, are excused. Some of us who remain bring out laptops and cellphones. Others play cards or board games provided in the room, as if on a cruise ship. Until we are excused for lunch at 11:30, we are confined to our room. Washrooms, lockers and a fast-food counter are accessible within our secure zone.

Our jury pool is divided equally into four "panels" and only one—not mine—is called into a courtroom that first day. Once 12 of them are chosen for a trial, the rest return to the grant waiting room. At 3:30 p.m., we are dismissed until just before 10 a.m. the next day.

As it turns out, I have little time to read that Tuesday. At 10:02, our panel of about 100 is called upstairs. It is standing-room-only in the courtroom as the four rows of benches overflow. At the front, the accused sits at one table with his lawyer; the Crown counsel and an investigating police officer are at another. The judge, in a black robe and crimson sash, strikes an imperial pose as he peers down at us from a dais halfway to the ceiling. He smiles and welcomes us, explains a little about the case and the jury selection procedure. He gently excuses potential jurors with hearing or language problems—and then the lottery begins.

The court registrar turns the crank of a drum and picks names one by one. When she reads out a name and that person's profession, the prospective juror steps forward to face the accused and the opposing lawyers. Both lawyers must accept a juror before he or she can be sworn in. By 10:15, I am the fourth one chosen, assigned my front row seat, and minutes later we are listening to the Crown's opening arguments.

Normal trial hours are from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but legal arguments often take place before and after. There are generally 15-minute breaks at 11:30 and 3:30—drinks and snacks provided. At first, these respites seem irritating—we want to get on with the case and not disrupt the flow. But we soon learn how tiring concentrating on evidence can be and appreciate the relief. Lunch is from 1:00 to 2:15.

> How do we feel, the judge asks us, about the prospect of spending the weekend incommunicado, working on the case?

Jury Room 225 is our new home away from home. This is where we take our breaks and gather every morning before the case resumes. Court Room 2-4 is 60 paces away, through two locked corridors. Our jury room has 12 chairs and a rectangular table with a small sofa. There are men's and women's washrooms, each separated from the main room by a small cloakroom. The floor-to-ceiling sealed windows along one side are opaque—to prevent anyone from signalling us from the outside. The air quickly becomes stale.

We are not allowed to discuss the evidence until all the testimony and submissions have been completed—certainly not among ourselves and not with anyone else, including family. The judge, who impresses us with his courtesy and consideration, tells us we *can* mention what the charges are. That evening, I answer the queries of my curious eight-year-old by focussing on Count 3 of the indictment, extortion, telling him that I am hearing a case about a woman who says a man stole money from her.

Every jury is overseen by a court official, and our minder, Mirella, tells us we can't eat in the building cafeteria in case we run into any of the parties to the case. She escorts us everywhere, always on the lookout for intruders. When we're about to enter the courtroom, we line up single file, like schoolchildren, according to our assigned jury number. Then we make an orderly entrance to our seats in the two rows of the jury box.

We are evenly split, six men and six women. Seven of us, though citizens, were born outside the country. We have refugees from Poland, Vietnam and the former Soviet Union. We range in age from our 20s to our 60s. Some are retired or not working. Our jobs are a mixed bag. We are clearly a cross-section.

The judge, bless him, says we may take notes. Mirella says it's very rare for a judge to permit this practice. Two of us, including me, take him up on the offer. It helps to keep me focussed. A journalist without a pad and pen is truly a fish out of water.

We hear the alleged victim's testimony on the first afternoon and for most of the next morning. The defence's cross-examination begins just before lunch on Wednesday and continues for the rest of the day and into Thursday morning. By the time it's over, I'm not sure what to believe. The complainant is inconsistent, contradictory and forgetful. I await supporting evidence, but the Crown has little to offer. There is only one other witness, a female police officer who testifies to the alleged victim's obvious distress when she visited the police station.

Now it's time for the defence. My fellow jurors expect the accused to testify but, as is his right, he does not. His counsel argues that the Crown has failed to prove its case "beyond a reasonable doubt." As the judge later reminds us, the defendant has no obligation to prove a thing. He is, after all, presumed innocent.

By Thursday afternoon, the evidence is complete. Summations will follow on Friday, and then instructions from the judge. After we hear from him, we will be sequestered until we reach a verdict—or he agrees that we are unable to reach one. How do we feel, he asks from his perch, about the prospect of spending the weekend incommunicado and working on the case? Our faces speak before we utter a word. Not to worry, he says kindly. Tomorrow, Friday, we will hear the Crown and the defence and then adjourn for the weekend. Bring pyjamas and a toothbrush on Monday, he advises.

Mirella tells us before we head home that if we can't reach an agreement by Monday evening, we will spend the night in a hotel across the street, each of us with a separate room but with no access to television, radio, newspapers or telephone. Any cellphones will be collected before our deliberations begin. She and a colleague will be outside our hotel rooms in the corridor throughout the night to make sure there is no contact with the outside world. The prospect strikes me with horror, especially the bit about no newspapers.

On Monday morning, His Honour instructs us for nearly an hour. He tells us we are the judges of the facts of the case. It's not sufficient that we think the defendant is "likely" guilty; we must find him guilty beyond a reasonable doubt—"an honest and fair doubt based on reason and com-



ILLUSTRATION BY JORGE COLOMBO

mon sense after hearing all the evidence." He also reviews inconsistencies in the Crown's case and tells us we should approach the complainant's evidence with the "greatest care and caution."

Our first order of business is to select a foreperson—they choose me. Before we begin, one male juror observes presciently that if we bring in a verdict of guilty, friends and family will congratulate us. But if we find someone charged with sexual assault not guilty, then we will be asked to explain ourselves.

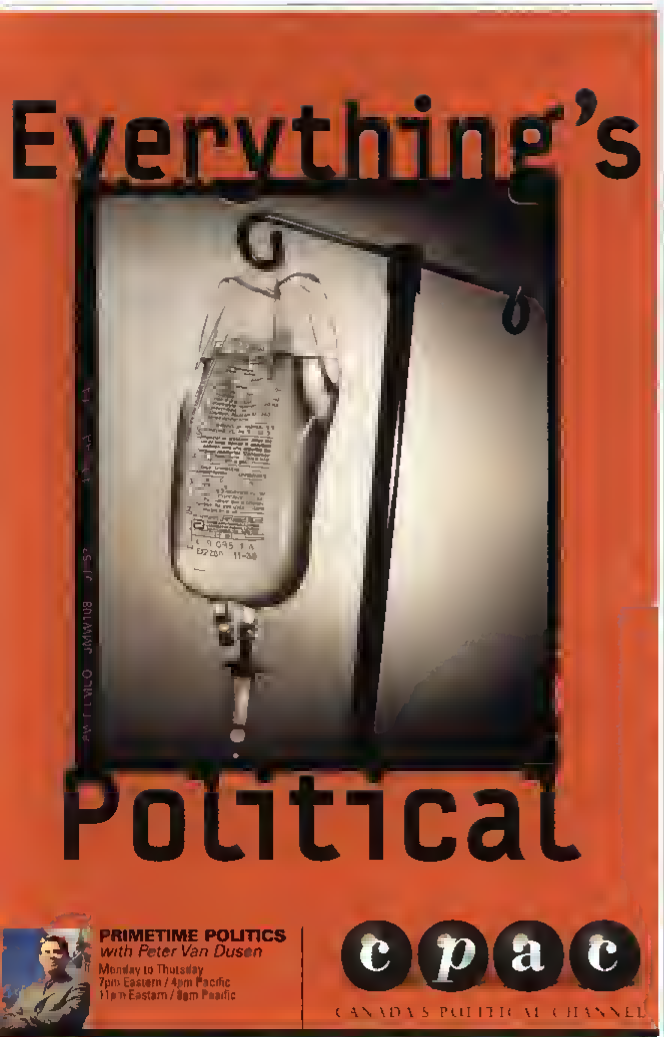
It is against the law to reveal the deliberations of a jury. This is a sensible provision that allows jurors to speak honestly in confidence that their words will never be used against them. As foreman, I try to ensure that everyone is heard, even though I may disagree with some of their opinions. I expect that for many of us, the complainant's emotional first day account will be the critical factor in the verdict.

Sandwiches are brought in for lunch. We continue to talk. Sometimes the discussion is heated, but everyone tries to be respectful of the views of others. After all, we are no longer strangers and we are sharing a unique experience. At about 5:30 p.m., we want the judge to repeat a part of his instructions. To get in touch with him, we must write down our question, put it in a specially provided envelope and close it with a court seal. Mirella takes the envelope to the judge and we wait until all the parties are rounded up and brought back to the courtroom. It takes only about 15 minutes and we return to hear His Honour review what he told us six hours earlier.

After we return to the jury room, I believe we are deadlocked. I have a terrible headache and I'm famished. It is now just before 6:30 p.m. and Mirella, with two other court officials, escorts us across the street to a hotel restaurant for dinner, during which we are not allowed to discuss the case. We go to an area separated from other customers and choose from a "Jury Menu." When I visit the washroom, I'm accompanied by our only male minder, along for just that purpose. The food is OK, but the service is slow and the only way we can be back by 8 to resume deliberations is by having takeout dessert and coffee. The judge has told us he will reconvene at 9:30 to decide whether we should be sent to our rooms for the night.

At 9:05 p.m. we reach a verdict. We agree the Crown has failed to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. When we reconvene in the courtroom, it's my duty to stand in the jury box and respond to each count as it is read out by the clerk. I try to avoid eye contact with anyone so nothing trips me up. After hearing all the "not guilties," the defendant collapses, sobbing, in the arms of his lawyer.

The judge thanks us and we are dismissed. We return to Room 225 for the last time and are packing to go when there is a knock on the door. It is His Honour, here to thank us once again. He truly seems to empathize with what we have been through. We thank him for his understanding. Most, but not all, of my fellow jurors thank me for my work as foreman. I'm comfortable with the verdict. Justice has been done. Even though we will never really know what happened.





ACCOMMODATING EVIL

Sometimes, military action is proper and necessary. Is this such a time?

COMPLEXITY IS NOT ONLY a reality in such daily activities as working through software or negotiating automated telephone prompts. It is also a regular, compelling pan of foreign policy reality—and the issue of confronting evil. That, in fact, is what many might argue France, Germany and Russia are suggesting in terms of the present Iraqi regime. Preventing the greater evil of war is what proponents of an American military stand-down—such as those countries—argue matters most. But there is no easy way out of this dialectic, for either side.

Innocent people die in Iraq every day because Saddam Hussein's government manages UN-imposed sanctions in a way that hurts the disadvantaged and children first. Repression, secret police, mass arrests, torture and murder are commonplace. Iraq awards money to the families of suicide bombers in a way that constitutes more than compensation for the bereaved, it's an incentive payment for those who will kill as many Israeli civilians as possible. So there is real evil in Iraq, not reflective of its people, but of a dictatorship that smothers consideration of their interests or will.

War, no matter how high-tech the weaponry or how carefully the campaign is conducted, condemns non combatants to die. That may happen because they live near a target of military necessity, or because Iraq's government may gas and attack its own people, as it has in the past, or Iraqis may die simply because of the ever-present, unavoidable confusion of war. Without war, we have the assured oppression and murder of many innocent Iraqis. With war, innocent Iraqis die nonetheless.

If the Bush White House has failed to convince the world of the logic of its argument for war—Iraq's connections to al-Qaeda and the events of Sept. 11 seem vague at best—it has not failed the tests of sincerity or intent. The call for "regime change" in Iraq clearly means more than this regime, at this time, in that country. When Jean Chretien rightly asks, "Who is next?" the implicit response from the Bush administration is clear: that the end of one despotic, cruel and malevolent regime should send a signal to those who have no interest or passing interest in democracy, and that the time for dithering has passed.

But proponents of democracy have to be frank about the results that any widespread introduction of a real democratic process might bring across the Mideast: they include serious threats to the Saudi, Jordanian and Egyptian regimes that have been supportive of U.S.-led efforts in recent years. They're among the few governments in the region with any moderate views, so real democratic change might produce real threats to these more moderate and friendly nations in the region. It's the classic moral dilemma—does the damage done in attacking one horrific evil overwhelm the benefits that eradicating that evil may bring?

The French argument against war on Iraq is, when you come down to it, a conservative one: it amounts to accommodating evil by addressing it slowly and defanging it over time. The American position is more radical: it suggests that if you accommodate evil because of the risks of confronting it, you legitimize that evil even as you abandon its victims of the past, present and future. For those without direct interests in the region, the history of each country's involvement in and with Iraq doesn't make deciphering the present complexity any easier. It tends to layer it with paternity and issue ancestry, which could confound any moral case for either the French or the Americans.

For those who believe that any war for any purpose is wrong, morality only exists on one side. But if you believe that international norms, institutions and goodwill are enough in themselves to make a military response to some evils utterly obsolete, you're replacing analysis with prayer. The risk of military response helped end the Cold War, and sadly it now must be invoked more regularly as a result of the end of the twin polarity of Eastern and Western bloc. We've already seen this in the Balkans. The new multipolarity of ethnic and identity conflicts, the absence of an overarching left right framework, and the dilution of the central purposes of old alliances are among the things that make this such a fascinating time in history. The real risk is that the exigencies of *realpolitik* make the salience of evil and morality a little too unmanageable and inconvenient. In a real way, this debate about Iraq is about means, not purpose.

But in the same way that the medium became the message, thanks to Marshall McLuhan, the means may become the morality in our day and age. If we were to believe that appropriate means must always exclude the military option, and that the United Nations has become a body devoid of any core morality, focused only on established sovereignties and appropriate means, it would be abdicating the moral high ground with which Lester Pearson and others invested the institution decades ago. While the present divisions between the founding nations of the UN may be spurring that abdication, the fact that it has happened presents a huge challenge for the core pillars of Canadian foreign policy.

If the United States, the U.K., and most of NATO—excluding Belgium, France and Germany—chose to form a new alliance that sought to be more focused and precise, or if the Americans had a presidential election campaign in which the option of withdrawing from the UN were put on the table, Canada would face stark choices that cut to the core of our values.

A Canadian prime minister urging the Americans to claim victory in Iraq, and then to move on—as Jean Chretien has done—makes immense sense in this context, and very much reflects Canada's traditional diplomatic interests. Things may not, however, be that simple.

With or without war, innocent Iraqis will die, whether from government oppression and murder or the confusion of combat

Hugh Segal is president of the Montreal-based Institute for Research on Public Policy, Canada's oldest non partisan think-tank. To comment: letters@macleans.ca

CRACKING THE GENETIC CODE

It's 50 years since two brash, ambitious scientists unveiled the double helix

A FEW years back, not long after Dolly the cloned ewe was sprung on an unsuspecting world, an Australian researcher reported that DNA was so ubiquitous it was literally oozing out of our pores. We humans were leaving little biological Post-Its of ourselves on everything we touched. Little bits of genetic code—how to build a nose, how to fight disease—searching perhaps for a chemical soulmate.

For a writer, this was a notion almost as staggering as the invention of Dolly. (Even if you don't read this article all the way through, Gentle Reader, touch the page and we will have danced the dance.) For one, it helped align the moral compass at a time when the genetic revolution seemed to be messing about madly in God's tool box. Think of it this way: if DNA, the chemical blueprint that we store in almost every cell of the body, and that we share with mice and flatworms, is *that* pervasive, that relentlessly life seeking, then maybe redirecting its course—by putting fish genes into plants or injecting adult brains with fetal cells—isn't as Frankensteinish as it might appear. Though there has certainly been plenty of that to go around.

It's 50 years since Cambridge based upstarts James Watson and Francis Crick kick started the genetic revolution with their depiction of what deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA, looked like (a double helix, like an entwined pair of circular staircases) and how it might replicate itself. A more accurate beginning would have been nine years earlier, in 1944, when cautious, Halifax-born Dr. Oswald Avery, and two associates at the Rockefeller Institute in New York, showed DNA was, in fact, the suitcase of heredity.

But in many ways the double helix proved to be the perfect up-and-down-staircase metaphor for an inventiveness that often held as much hype as promise. And Watson and Crick were perfect poster boys. Brash, competitive and on the make, both had migrated to genetics from other disciplines and had little time for the leadened ways of older practitioners. Watson, an American,



Watson (left) and Crick opened the doors to DNA evidence, cloning and genetic therapies

was only 24 at the time, a brainy, slightly awkward birdwatcher who has since told the world way too much about his difficulties dating young women. Crick, at 36, was an unrepentant theoretician. He was the one who strode into a Cambridge pub on Feb. 28, 1953, and announced, "we have found the secret of life," something his wife had heard several times before. (He would later theorize that biological life on earth had been seeded millions of years ago from outer space.)

Together they proved a fateful pairing of two brilliantly compatible minds obsessed with resolving the biggest intellectual challenge of their day, and unafraid to march over the less ambitious on their path to glory. Their big break came when a disgruntled colleague of King's College rival Rosalind Franklin, a smart, tragic figure, surreptitiously showed Watson one of her X-rays with the shadowy outline of the entwined helix. Franklin was proceeding more cautiously with her research. But for Watson, the imagery matched all that he and Crick had been talking about. So they dashed off a paper for the science journal *Nature* and, from those hothouse beginnings, it's been pretty much a straight line to the sex-obsessed, jump the gun, let's-clone-a-human Raelians, with stops en route at Dolly and Craig Venter, the science mogul who tried to patent the entire human genome.

It would be nearly 25 years before Watson and Crick's double helix could actually be seen on a modern electron microscope. But this was a revolution that had no time to wait. In the early 1970s, scientists cloned the first small African tree frog and began the earliest experiments in genetic engineering. Among them was Vancouver's Michael Smith, a transplanted Brit, who dis

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ILLUSTRATION BY SANDRA D'ONISI

covered—after a series of propitious chemical explosions—how to produce what is known as recombinant DNA by altering the sequences of a gene in a lab. Rewriting, in effect, the chemical code of life.

His findings were so freakish that the leading journal of his day refused to publish them. He would later win a Nobel Prize (as did Watson and Crick in 1962) and earn a tidy fortune as his technique became the mainstay of the first bioengineering boom, in the 1980s. That was when scientists began talking about ridding the world of inherited disorders like Down's syndrome, of tailoring drug treatments to an individual's genetic makeup, of stopping cancer in its tracks, of finding the DNA switch to extend the human lifespan, of ending global hunger with disease resistant foods, of growing new pharmaceuticals simply and cheaply in a field of wheat.

It was also a time when evolutionary biologists started hypothesizing genes for specific types of behaviour, everything from why certain men fool around so much to why some kill. By that point, anthropology was already being rewritten by the molecular biologists: the time since humankind broke from the apes was reset 10 million years closer to the present and the human tree was being much more precisely delineated. The law would be next.

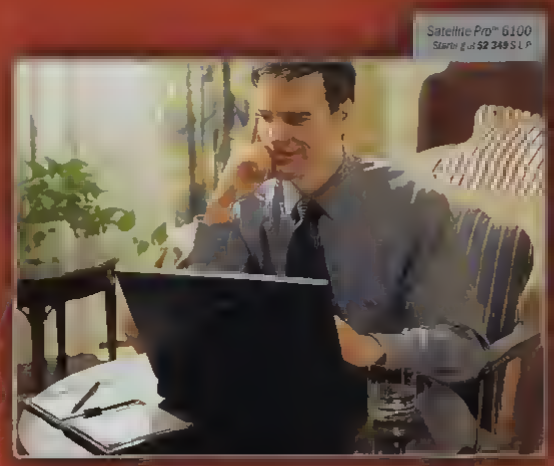
The mysterious entity at the heart of the revolution, DNA, is a kind of chemical soup, an ultra-complex blueprint of nearly three billion possible connections for directing proteins, the building blocks of life, and telling individual cells what to do—to release insulin, say, when sugar levels are low, to send white blood cells to fight an infection, or to build an organ like the heart from scratch. DNA is a soup we share with all of life. But humans are also like snowflakes. No two of us are exactly alike (save for identical twins) and the tiny, less than-one per-cent difference in each person's DNA makeup comprises a genetic fingerprint that transformed the legal system.

O. J. Simpson's celebrity murder trial in 1995—and the much-debated bloody glove—brought DNA evidence to the tabloids. David Milgaard, Guy Paul Morin—the vanguard of Canada's wrongfully convicted to benefit from DNA forensics—forever moved justice's steely yardsticks. Today it is commonplace for national police forces to maintain a DNA database that can reactivate "cold files," and Canadian judges routinely order the newly convicted to give over a DNA swab to see if there is a connection to an earlier crime.

DNA evidence, with the imprimatur of complex, confident science on it, revived the capital punishment debate in the United States and helped empty Illinois's death row earlier this year. From there it was only

intel inside
pentium 4

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to someone with
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a short jump to prime-time TV, where DNA-dominated police shows top the ratings. Everyone loves a mystery. Especially the kind we believe we can solve.

Disease, though, proved a harder nut. Some found it ironic that on Feb. 28, 50 years to the day since the Watson-Crick eureka, medical regulators in the U.S. met to pronounce an end to gene therapy, except when it might be a treatment of last resort. The reason: two young boys in France, injected with a genetically altered virus to give them an immune system where nature had not, had developed leukemia. It was not the first mishap. In 1999, Jesse Gelsinger, an 18-year-old from Tucson, Ariz., became the first known death by gene therapy. It was then revealed that hundreds of other "serious" reactions had not been reported to American authorities.

Canada's role in all this has been modest but not insignificant. The good news, notes Alan Bernstein, president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and a genetics researcher of repute, is that we have the second largest biotech industry in the world. The bad news is that it's made up mostly of small, undercapitalized companies in a country that ranks in the bottom third of industrialized nations in terms of per capita research spending.

Still, federal funds are beginning to flow in handsome amounts (nearly $1.4 billion in the past three years just to the CIHR alone) and we've had our share of stars. Apart from Smith, the Nobel winner, and Bernstein, whose Toronto lab was among the first to introduce a genetically altered retrovirus into the stem cells of mice, one of the more far-reaching techniques, Canadians have taken the leading role in identifying key disease genes for cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy and early-onset Alzheimer's.

We have set the gold standard—the Edmonton protocol—for modifying pancreatic cells to treat certain types of diabetes. We have also been in the vanguard of examining the environmental mysteries of genetic disorders. The ethical dilemmas, too—not surprising for a country that can ferret out how to inject altered DNA into a cell (Bernstein's research among others) but has been reluctant to extend that to clinical use. "Yes, we haven't moved as quickly into gene therapy as others," allows Bernstein. "But maybe the rest of the world moved too fast."

As revolutions go, DNA's blustery march has followed the historic pattern of advance and retreat. Dolly, the famous exact replica of an adult ewe, was beset by problems of old age before dying at six years, about half a normal sheep's lifespan. Before and since her, animal clones have been born with horrendous abnormalities from which they did not survive. Genetically modified foods have been dogged by controversies over taste, their potential as a health hazard and their ability to spread into neighbouring crops, with a potential of creating a broad tolerance for herbicides or pesticides that could prove difficult to overcome. The great biotech promise can be summed up in part by the stock fortunes of Venter's Maryland-based Celera Genomics: three years ago it traded at US$247, today it's worth about US$8.20.

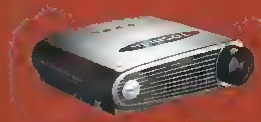
For all her fame, Dolly the cloned ewe showed signs of old age by the time she died at six, half the normal lifespan of a sheep

Still, thanks to gene therapy, at least a dozen young boys in France, Britain, Italy and the U.S. are living near-normal lives, released from the virus- and bacteria-free "bubbles" where they'd been confined after being born without an effective immune system. So, too, is the first gene-therapy patient, 17-year-old Ashanti de Silva, 13 years after doctors in Boston injected genetically altered blood cells into her veins for the same problem. Cancer and genetic disorders like schizophrenia are no longer clinical black holes, void of understanding. And even if science can't yet figure out the complex pathways to cure or switch off faulty genetic wiring—and remember, we are dealing with a minute, self-propagating strand with billions of complex chemical interactions twisted upon itself in a chromosome that can compress to a thousandth of a millimetre—the genetic revolution has fundamentally changed the way we think about disease. We have entered an era where many (and soon most) newborns have their genetic blueprint identified. That will give them advance notice of their predilection to one disease or another—adding, of course, as Watson and Crick did, to the burden of choice. That most human of dilemmas, it fairly oozes out of us. M

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FROM MEMORY TO MEANING

Four Canadian authors look back with insight, passion and anger

THE PAST may be a foreign country for most of us, the place where they do things differently, but it's a writer's natural home, the source of memory, meaning and—above all—stories. Much of the last decade's best Canadian fiction, from Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* to Wayne Johnston's *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*, has burrowed deep into history, personal and political, national and global. Writers have looked to the past not only to explain how we came to the here and now, but to explore themes ranging from the treachery of memory to the art and morality of storytelling itself. An obsession with history, in fact, has become the dominant mode of CanLit—the common *Canadian* link among this multicultural country's wide diversity of writers.

The standouts in recent fiction from lesser-known authors are all works that look back, with varying degrees of passion and anger. Characters in Jacqueline Baker's **A Hard Witching** (HarperCollins), fine short stories as austere as their setting—the Sand

Basilières' *Black Bird* is a wildly inventive and darkly funny take on the October Crisis

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE PIMENTEL

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Hills region of Saskatchewan—never quite shake their awareness of a more hopeful past. **Kipligat's Chance** (Penguin), playwright David Odhiambo's gritty novel about an African Canadian teen reaching for track stardom in contemporary Vancouver, is explicable only in the light of flashbacks to the boy's Kenyan childhood. In **Mme. Proust and the Kosher Kitchen** (Doubleday), theatre critic Kate Taylor, born in France and raised in Ottawa, creates a moving meditation on Parisian and Toronto history. But nothing *plays* with history like Michel Basilières' stunning debut novel **Black Bird** (Knopf), a wildly inventive and darkly funny take on the October Crisis.

Not your father's October Crisis, though. Basilières, who grew up in Montreal with his francophone father and anglophone mother, was 10 years old when an FLQ cell kidnapped British diplomat James Cross in the fall of 1970. Childhood memories filtered through a delight in the macabre make Basilières' version very different from the start. Although the place is very clearly Montreal, and someone named Cross is abducted, the time is impossible to pin down. One character, among many who feel powerless to make any impact on the world, is reading Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, a novel first published in 1984. There's already a Parti Québécois premier in office—something that was, of course, not the case in 1970—and this unnamed chain-smoker runs over a pedestrian one New Year's Eve. (The victim was not, as in René Lévesque's 1977 accident, a homeless man lying on the road, but a tipsy FLQ terrorist screaming "Vive le Québec libre!" at the moment of impact.)

An obsession with history has become the common *Canadian* link among this multicultural country's wide diversity of writers

Then again, since Basilières' main characters, the extended Desouche family, live off Grandfather's sinister trade of bodysnatching, the whole novel has an anachronistic feel. Unlike 19th-century "resurrection men," who provided corpses for medical schools, Grandfather—like the premier, many characters are known only by their archetypes—has just one customer. That would be mad doctor Cameron Hyde, whose name reflects both Dr. Jekyll's alter ego and Montreal's real-life evil scientist, Dr. Ewen Cameron. (In the 1950s and '60s, Cameron, a world-renowned Montreal psychiatrist, used experimental methods—including massive doses of electroshock, and injections of LSD and the muscle relaxant curare—on unsuspecting patients. In most cases, they were permanently brain-damaged or psychologically shattered.)

Montreal police, the target of Basilières' most vicious barbs (even nastier than the ones he directs at the Catholic Church), know all about the family business. When they need to cover up the premier's unfortunate incident, they show up at the Desouche door, dead terrorist in hand. Everything seems to work out nicely. The cops shed an inconvenient burden, Grandfather gets a rare winter prize—things are always slow after the cemetery grounds freeze—and the doctor receives an unusually fresh body. "This was one good corpse," sums up Basilières' sardonic narrator. The exception to the general delight is granddaughter Marie, the dead man's secret lover and fellow FLQ member. Her reaction to Hubert's broken body—she assumes he was beaten to death by the police—eventually fills the streets of Montreal with soldiers.

Bravura plotting—the author ties up loose ends with Dickensian aplomb—and comic talent are only the surface of *Black Bird*'s achievement. Basilières has the essential qualities of a first-rate satirist, in spades. He displays an abiding love for his characters, however awfully they behave, but his rage is equally inextinguishable. After Grandfather loses an eye to his pet crow—which then, in *Black Bird*'s funniest sequence, takes to following the old man about like Capt. Hook's crocodile, hoping for another taste—the reader assumes some obvious transcendence is in the offing: having lost an eye, Grandfather will gain perspective. Basilières briefly raises the possibility before gleefully slamming the door on it. This man, who dug up his first wife, sold her body to Hyde and gave the ring she wore in the coffin to his second bride, emerges from his ordeal nastier than ever.

And there are intriguing themes as well, including the potential quagmire of bilingualism. The Desouches are an uneasy Anglo-French blend, some speak both languages, some only one, and misunderstandings abound. Grandson Jean-Baptiste prefers French novels to English works but cannot read them in the original. That feeling of being suspended between the two solitudes probably reflects Basilières' own life—he now lives in Toronto and wrote *Black Bird* in English. His brilliant novel is, in fact, an extended metaphor for the messy, intractable,







Taylor meditates on Parisian and Toronto history, Odhiambo casts back to a teen's Kenyan boyhood, Baker sees hope in old Saskatchewan

MICHAEL RAFELSON, COURTESY OF PENGUIN, COURTESY OF HARPERCOLLINS

essentially unbreakable web that history has made of Canada.

Bilingualism is also a theme running through Kate Taylor's elegant first novel *Mme. Proust and the Kosher Kitchen*. Marie, the contemporary Montreal protagonist of a story that stretches back a century, is a translator who often looks wistfully on unilingual lives "no awkwardness or difficulty, false starts or left turns." But her linguistic hesitations are only part of her larger concerns over identity and belonging.

Madame Proust, whose diaries Marie is reading, is an assimilated Jew who sees her family torn apart by the anti-Semitic overtones of the Dreyfus affair, even as she frets over the future prospects of her delicate son, Marcel, whose homosexuality she never openly acknowledges. A generation later, Sarah Bensimon is a young Jewish girl sent from Paris to Canada to escape the Nazis, after she learns her parents have perished in the Holocaust, she builds an uneasy life in Toronto, trying to recapture the past in her kitchen. Marie, for her part, is in Paris on the run from an unrequited passion for Sarah's son, another gay man.

Marie, the protagonist of *Mme. Proust and the Kosher Kitchen*, comes to view literature as 'the cure for heartbreak'

Fittingly, in a novel coloured by the presence of Marcel Proust, the original obsessed-with-the-past writer, pure memory comes to have no value for Marie. The translator dedicated to "words, not meaning," begins to "aspire," in her words, to the higher calling of storytelling, starting down the path to the conclusion of this subtle and beautiful novel: "I have found the cure for heartbreak. It is literature."

Few people in Jacqueline Baker's *A Hard Winter*, eight stories set among the hard-scrabble farm country near the Sand Hills of Saskatchewan, actively feel sorry for themselves. But they're aware there were once more people, more good times, more hope, and many feel the fragility of their way of life. In *Sand Hills*, the narrator's dying mother, the daughter of a family who constantly told tall tales to brighten their drab existence, explains a line of boots stuck upside down on fence posts. "Those boots have been there as long as you and as long as me and as long as your grandmother, as long as people have lived and died on this land." And, conveniently forgetting the natives, three generations is about right.

Baker's style is spare and elliptical, none of her stories has the feel, like some short fiction, of being novels that didn't quite work out. Nor do they yield their meanings easily. But Baker's insights into the human heart are acute, and she displays a gift for extracting large meaning from brief moments, such as in the title piece. There, a lonely widow feels the underpinnings of her whole life knocked loose by the sight of a diviner climbing out of her dry well. "As her eyes adjusted to the darkness and the man drew nearer, she could make out his shape coming slowly toward her, and she was overcome by an awful terror, as if everything evil in the world was about to climb up out of that pit."

David Odhiambo's *Kipligat's Chance* promises, at first glance anyway, a more straightforward story. At 16, John "Leeds" Kipligat, an African refugee living with his parents in a rundown part of Vancouver and doing his best to win a track scholarship at an elite U.S. university, seems as newly made as any immigrant or teenager. He's at ease in contemporary street idiom, a nice kid with prospects and friends—including girlfriends—capable of bantering with local whores and being helpful to his parents. So why, then, does Leeds occasionally lock himself in the bathroom and slice his arms with his father's razor blade?

The answer lies in the upheavals that, five years earlier, had driven his family from Kenya and led to the disappearance of his adored older brother, the favoured child. Odhiambo, 38, who came to Canada from Kenya at about the same age as Leeds, describes Vancouver life in an engaging, choppy, hip-hop style. And the running sequences, far from being a too-easy metaphor for a kid fleeing his troubles, are gripping. But Odhiambo's writing moves up another notch in Leeds's Kenyan flashbacks—in which the teenager is visibly straining to keep childhood memory alive by shaping it into a narrative. *Remembrance of Things Past*, the title of Marcel Proust's masterpiece, seems to be CanLit's goal as well.

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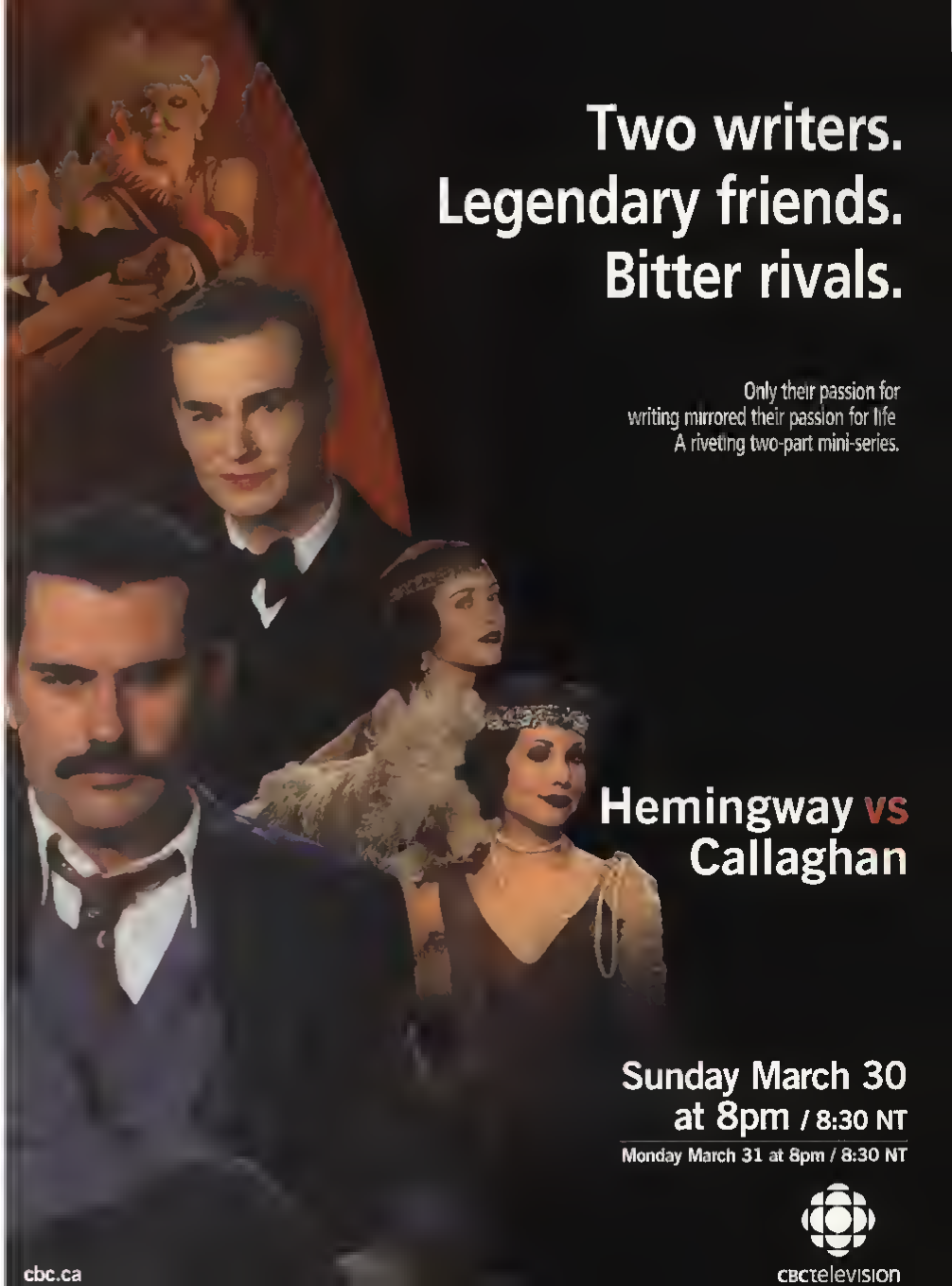
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'WE ARE RESPONDING'

The life of a volunteer firefighter is disruptive, dangerous—and rewarding

IT IS DEEPEST night when I'm jolted from slumber by a strident tone, a series of beeps and then the call: "911 dispatch to all Canning firefighters, you have a report of a barn fire on Highway 221."

Before the dispatcher has even finished her call, I'm out of my bed, scattering sleeping cats like popcorn, groping for clothes. Pause long enough to snatch the still muttering pager, leap into my shoes (always untied), run out the door. As I jump in the car, I hear the siren's wail split the night, and the response of our chief echoes from our pagers: "This is Canning, XJH 332, we have received your page and are responding."

We are responding. Across the area served by the Canning Volunteer Fire Department in Nova Scotia, the same scene is being played out by a group of dedicated men and one dedicated woman, me. I arrive at our hall and tear into the fire bay, even as the first truck rolls out. In the radio room, our dispatcher talks to 911, calling for backup. I kick off my sneakers, step into my fire retardant bunker pants and boots, grab jacket, Nomex hood and helmet, and lumber in my too-large boots toward the next truck to roll. On board with several others, I hear the captain say, "BAs on, guys." Ugh. Still, I shrug the heavy breathing apparatus onto my shoulders and haul the mask over my face as we scream through the night.

In 1996, I realized a long-time desire by joining this rural volunteer fire department, becoming the first woman member in its 100-years-plus history. I was an unlikely looking firefighter: in my late 30s, not athletic, often arriving clad in riding breeches and boots, or a dress, to answer the page. But I loved the fire department, the smells of the truck bay, the banter with the rest of the guys, the satisfaction of a job well done.

Time contorts en route to a fire. While there's urgency to get to the job, a focused calm descends, as methodically I check my gear. Air bottle turned on, regulator adjusted. Check the pressure gauge and make sure the bottle is full. Adjust my flame-retardant hood, haul the helmet on and check it, make sure snaps and Velcro and hooks and straps are fastened. Conversation is limited with the heavy face masks, and each of us is alone with our thoughts. How bad will it be? Is anyone hurt? How will we fight it?

We see the blaze even as we roar around the last corner, flames leaping into the night sky, jets of water already cascading onto the heat. The truck is barely stopped when we're off, several colleagues grabbing a line and heading purposefully toward the scene. I look for the red hat of an officer to take my orders. My captain points me toward another firefighter, and hollers over the noise, "Go back him up on the line."

"Roger." I make my way carefully through the maze of hoses to slap the firefighter on the shoulder, and take up position behind him, bracing to help carry the line and improve pressure from the nozzle. Around us there is organized chaos, as other departments arrive and deploy.

The fire is a thing of deadly beauty. It undulates in a seductive dance, flinging itself disdainfully into the night, feeding greedily on the 5,000 bales of hay that were stored in the barn. I watch from within my mask, listening to my echoing breaths, willing myself to breathe slow, make the air last longer so that I don't have to change sooner. I lean forward to check my partner's gauge—five minutes left. I point, and he nods, passes the nozzle to me and strides toward our utility vehicle for another bottle. I settle in with the hose straining against me, playing a spray of water back and forth across the wall and across the empty diesel tanks nearby. I look up at the flames, now slumping back a little. I remember how as a child I was terrified of fire, terrified of the fire siren that blew at noon and during alarms, terrified of death by the flames' searing power. Those fears are long gone, and in their place are strength, surety, a quiet confidence in what I do and why I do it. And doing this has helped bring me to that point.

The fire is gasping, wallowing now in thousands of gallons of water, its power lessened. It will be hours yet before we leave this scene, as we clean up rubble, hose down hot spots, determine what caused the blaze, then finally head back to the station and clean our gear.

Back at the hall later we are filthy, muddy, sweaty, thirsty, hot, tired, wet and hungry, and we have that distinctive smell that comes from working in smoke for hours. We're also cheerful, making fun of each other, flicking water around, releasing the tensions that come with the job.

I spent more than three years with the fire department before demands of family and work meant there wasn't enough time left to be an active volunteer. I regretfully resigned, but as editor of the small community newspaper, I continue to help by keeping Canning informed of the department's work and supporting fundraising efforts. When the trucks roll past our house, I often yearn to be with them.

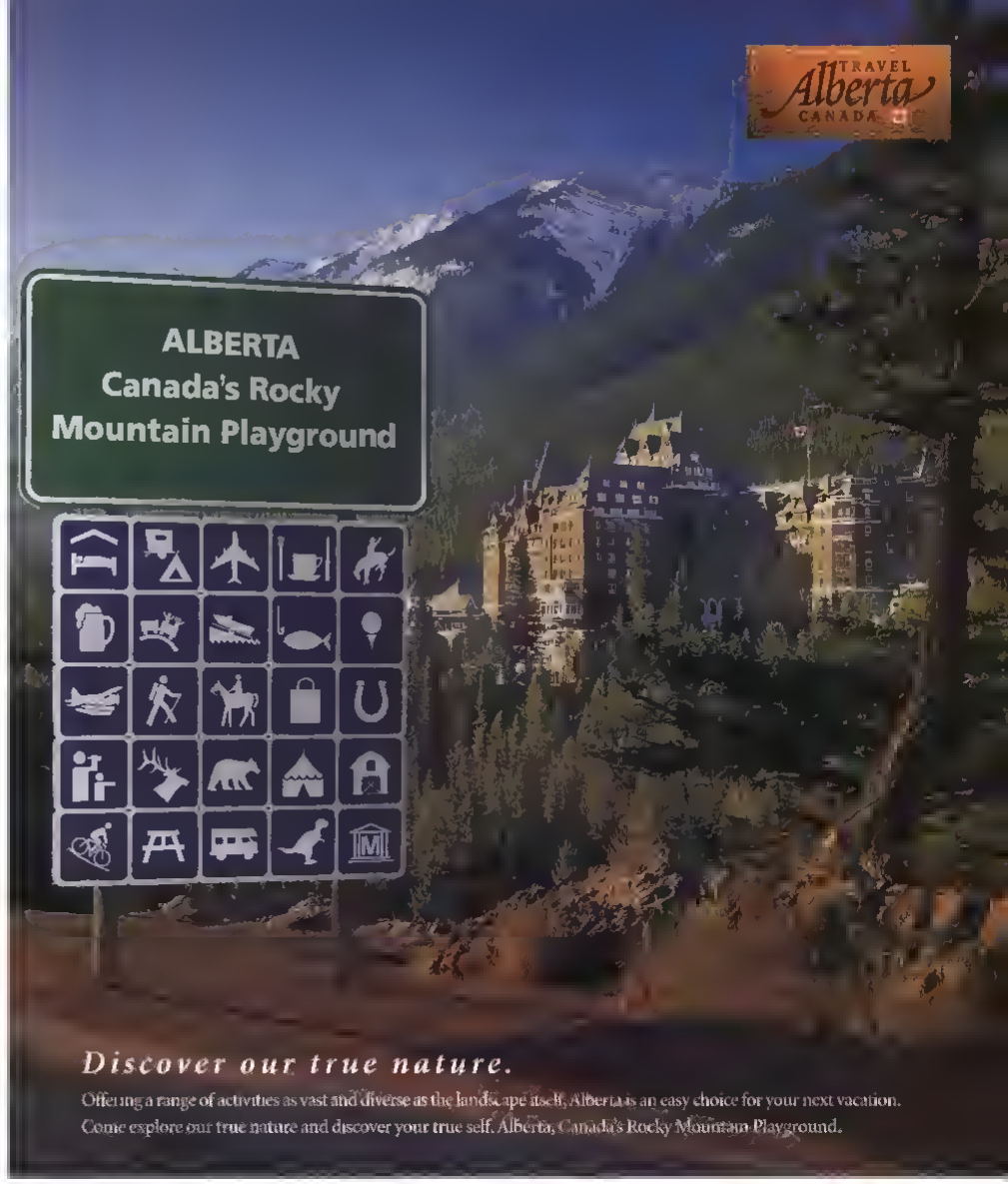
A business associate once said to me, "Firefighters are the ultimate volunteers. Who else would run toward a situation everyone else would run away from? And you do it for nothing, sometimes not even a thanks." To a point he's right, but you can't put a price on what I received from firefighting.

Fire is used in craftwork to temper and shape and strengthen materials. It did the same for me. M



ILLUSTRATION BY GAIL GELTNER

Freelance writer Jodi DeLong edits *The Canning Gazette*. To comment: overtoyou@macleans.ca



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CLOSINGNOTES



MUSIC | 60
Composing himself for the big 9-0
Former students and colleagues will celebrate Toronto composer/professor John Weinzweig's 90th birthday with a concert of new works. Weinzweig himself will contribute a piece for four violins and voice, to be sung by mezzo soprano Jean Stilwell.



ART | 62
Young and artsy? Go to Winnipeg.
Two new exhibitions introduce a talented crop of artists hailing from this Prairie city.



People | Even a Buddhist feels publishing pressure

Mipham Rinpoche mellows out in Halifax at his global meditation centre

Publishing a first book can be an unnerving experience—even if you're the *sakyong* (Tibetan for "earth protector") **Sakyong Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche**, a 40-year-old Tibetan lama, is the spiritual director of Shambhala International, a global network of urban meditation and rural retreat centres started by his father and now run from Halifax. And there are high expectations for his recently published meditation primer, *Turning the Mind into an Ally*, considering Sakyong Mipham is viewed as the reincarnation of **Mipham Jamyang Namgyal**—a revered 19th century meditation master and scholar whose sacred texts are still pored over in monasteries throughout Tibet. "Now that's pressure," laughs Sakyong Mipham.

When Sakyong Mipham was four years old, his father, **Chogyam Trungpa**, fled the family's Tibetan refugee village in India for Scotland, where he established the West's first Tibetan Buddhist meditation. In 1969, at age seven, Sakyong Mipham joined his father—and by 14, was spending two hours daily on the meditation cushion. In 1995, eight years after his father's death, he became Sakyong. "I feel the responsibility," says Sakyong Mipham. "But I'm not burdened by it."

Turning the Mind into an Ally shows that Sakyong Mipham, who likes to golf and ride horses in his spare time, shares his father's goal of spreading the concepts and tenets of Shambhala throughout the West. "The ultimate aspect of meditation is that one can have peaceful synergy within one's own mind," says Sakyong Mipham. "How do we expect people to peacefully coexist unless someone at least has an inclination for that kind of discovery?" JOHN DEMONT

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Listings | Eclectic outings

The CanAsian Dance Festival
March 26-30
From Korean shamanistic and Chinese operatic dances to more contemporary choreography, this Betty Oliphant Theatre event features performers from across the country
Toronto

Little Bear's Wonderful Journey
Until June 15
An astronomical show at the Montreal Planetarium's Star Theatre asks children to help the constellation Little Bear (who fell from the sky while sleeping) find her mother, Great Bear.
Montreal

Mom & Tots Fair
March 28-29
Held at the Roundup Centre, the Mom & Tots Fair is filled with information for parents who are looking for health and safety tips, recipes and new baby products.
Calgary

Fishing and Outdoor Recreation Expo
April 4-6
The Pictou County Rivers Association's 10th annual fair has everything from hunting and fishing supplies to specialized clothing and a fly tying demo.
New Glasgow, N.S

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S; ROYAL ART LODGE, UNTITLED (COLLABORATIVE DRAWING)



Music | Still composing after all these years

Composer **John Weinzweig** has a good memory. "In 1947, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra performed my *Divertimento No. 1 for Flute and Strings*," he recalls, "and a newspaper music critic said, 'These young composers shouldn't subject the public to this awful music, they should try it out on their dogs first.' But I had no dog." Instead, the following year Weinzweig and the Canadian Music Council submitted the same work to the cultural arm of the London Olympiad and it won a silver for chamber music.

Weinzweig was born in Toronto in 1913—and has been composing since he was 16. He studied music at the University of Toronto, was an instructor in the air force band division during the war, wrote scores for CBC Radio and the NFB, was a professor at U of T—and became one of Canada's premier orchestral composers.

On March 23, Toronto's New Music Concerts will celebrate his 90th birthday with a performance at Glenn Gould Studios, featuring a new work by Weinzweig. *Prologue to a Tango* is for four violins and a female voice—**Jean Stilwell** will perform the debut. "The scene is a dance hall in a town in Latin America," says Weinzweig. "The singer's very sad and then she hears the tango music and becomes exhilarated. A singer like Stilwell, with an operatic background, can create these kind of emotions." And, at 90 years of age, so can Weinzweig. SHANDA DEZIEL



Diversions | Jack Layton

Here's what the NDP Leader likes:

MUSIC. STRIKE A DEEP CHORD by various artists. "On this blues compilation, **Dr. John** and **Odetta** do a version of *Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?*, which brings you to tears."

BOOKS: EMPIRE OF THE ANTS by **Bernard Werber**. "It's about ants, but ends up being an allegory with lessons for us. It's quite delightful."

DVDs | The miles of March

8 MILE
(Universal, March 18)



So you thought Eminem went soft with his film debut. Think again. The uncensored version of the *8 Mile* DVD includes the rapper's new music video *Superman*—four obscene minutes of Eminem and a weathered porn-star type alternately fondling and fighting with each other. Better off skipping that train wreck and going straight to the DVD extras that actually concern the movie. The fascinating world of Detroit—and hip-hop battles—that's introduced in the film is given fuller treatment in the "making of" featurettes.

MOONLIGHT MILE
(Buena Vista, March 11)



This portrait of a family coping with loss, starring Dustin Hoffman, Susan Sarandon and Jake Gyllenhaal, didn't get nearly enough attention at the box office. But a movie about mourning is a hard sell. In the DVD's interviews, the actors and director, Brad Silberling, stress that they made this film to honestly show the humour in death—the ludicrous things that happen at tragic times. Still not interested? Then watch it for the music. Set in 1973, *Moonlight Mile*—named after a lesser-known Rolling Stones song—captures the sound of the U.S. just as it's nearing the end of the Vietnam War.

THE OSBOURNES. THE FIRST SEASON
(Buena Vista, March 4)



Even if you love these heavy-metal Cleavers, five hours of Ozzy extras are unnecessary. It's a well-known fact that the success of reality shows lies in the editing. And it's certainly the case here, as deleted scenes and unedited footage provide no great benefit to the series. Even the bloopers aren't that funny. And yet, the actual episodes from the first season are a must for any TV collection.

Other March releases include: **Auto Focus**, the biopic of *Hogan's Heroes* star Bob Crane; the first season of TV's long-running cop drama **NYPD Blue**; and sci-fi cartoon **Futurama**, and for the kids, **Meet Strawberry Shortcake**. S.D.

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Art | A happy, talented collective

In mid-1996, a group of University of Manitoba fine arts students started meeting every Wednesday in their shared studio. Together they worked on drawings as well as paintings, videos, collages, fanzines, masks, costumes, dioramas, kites and even puppets. The Royal Art Lodge was born. Today, the group—made up of **Michael Dumontier, Hollie Dzama, Marcel Dzama, Neil Farber, Drue Langlois** and **Myles Langlois**—is still going strong. They're all full-time artists and range in age from 18 to mid-30s. Some, like Marcel Dzama, are established, others, like his 18-year-old sister, Hollie, are just beginning to come into their own.

Recently an exhibit of their works, titled *Ask the Dust*, was displayed at the Drawing Centre in New York City—and broke all attendance records at the 25-year-old gallery. Yet, despite a growing international reputation, these artists remain based in Winnipeg. "I think this notion of working collectively rings a bell with people—that there is still a glimmer of hope for such an activity that has a note of authenticity and shared responsibility," explains **Wayne Baerwaldt**, co-curator of *Ask the Dust* and director of Toronto's Power Plant gallery, where the show will be displayed from March 21 to May 25. "And you look at these works and you are repeatedly enchanted or humoured or devastated with this sort of wavering between the philosophical depth and the pop surface."

After Toronto, the show of over 700 Royal Art Lodge pieces is scheduled to hang in Holland's De Vleeshal gallery. And seven North American and European galleries are currently vying for the honour of showing *Ask the Dust*. Certainly, they're hoping to break some attendance records of their own. AMY CAMERON



Art | Hey, we're from Winnipeg too

An unnamed Royal Art Lodge creation (left); Plug In's hot new artists

In art, timing can be everything. Capitalizing on the success of the Royal Art Lodge, Winnipeg's Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art is holding a show titled *Young Winnipeg Artists* (until May 31). The multimedia exhibition is made up of works from 15 of the city's new artists, between the ages of 22 and 33. There are installations by **KC Adams, Risa Horowitz** and **Erika Lincoln**, paintings by **Roger Crait, Simon Hughes, Jake Kosciuk, Shaun Morin, Melanie Rocan** and **Lisa Wood**, photographs by **Chris MacDonald, Les Newman, Veronica Preweda** and **Dominique Rey**, and mixed media pieces by **Cyrus Smith** and **Parminder Obhi**.

What is it about this extreme weather Prairie city that produces an overflow of creative talent? "There is a low-rent, Value Village culture here that feeds into the art," explains the show's co-curator **Cliff Eyland**, a University of Manitoba School of Art professor. "They're in a place where it is cheap to live. That's the key thing. The kids in Toronto can't afford to make art."

Unlike the Royal Art Lodge, these artists generally work solo—but their show is thematic in how it tries to be representative of what is happening in the city. What's missing, says Eyland, are the large Prairie landscape paintings of an older generation, people like **Eleanor Bond** and **Wanda Koop**. "These new artists don't think by medium. They're not brought up like that," says Eyland, who also believes that Winnipeg artists generally work more by instinct than intellectually. "Before they get to art school, they've already picked up a video camera, made a painting, done some audio. They're not afraid of technology and they're very ambitious and very competitive." A.C.

'There is a low-rent, Value Village culture here that feeds into the art'

ROYAL ART LODGE, UNTITLED (COLLABORATIVE DRAWING), JANUARY 30, 2002, COURTESY OF

Books | Clashing by night

Anyone wondering how the United States passed from worldwide support in September 2001 for its war on terrorism to the almost universal skepticism that greets its proposed attack on Iraq, could do worse than to read Gwynne Dyer's *Ignorant Armies* (McClelland & Stewart). Dyer makes no bones about his opposition to the White House's plans, but his account is considerably more coherent than Bush's case for war. More sobering is the author's evaluation of possible after effects. Dyer admits things could turn out as the U.S. predicts: a short war followed by an emerging Iraqi democracy. But he believes the chances of things going wrong are high—a widening conflict that draws in Israel and topples pro-Western governments, including Pakistan's, and the transfer of Pakistani nuclear weapons into terrorist hands. It all adds up, in Dyer's reckoning, to a strong possibility of "the most counterproductive war since Napoleon's invasion of Russia."



BESTSELLERS

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	**THE ROMANTIC,** Barbara Gowdy (5)	1
2.	**THE KING OF TORTS,** John Grisham (3)	6
3.	**TEN THOUSAND LOVERS,** Edeet Ravel (1)	
4.	**CROSSROADS OF TWILIGHT,** Robert Jordan (9)	3
5.	**THE LOVELY BONES,** Alice Sebold (33)	2
6.	**THE LAST CROSSING,** Guy Vanderhaeghe (22)	5
7.	**THE NAVIGATOR OF NEW YORK,** Wayne Johnston (27)	7
8.	**PATTERN RECOGNITION** William Gibson (31	8
9.	**UNLESS,** Carol Shields (48)	4
10.	**MME. PROUST AND THE KOSHER KITCHEN,** Kate Taylor (1)	

Non-fiction

1.	**PARIS 1919,** Margaret MacMillan (13)	1
2.	**STUPID WHITE MEN** Michael Moore (53)	2
3.	**OF PARADISE AND POWER,** Robert Kagan (1)	
4.	**ALMOST THERE,** Nuala O'Faolain (1)	
5.	**MICHELANGELO AND THE POPE'S CEILING,** Ross King (4)	3
6.	**WINTER WORLD,** Bernd Heinrich (2)	5
7.	**BUSH AT WAR,** Bob Woodward (15)	6
8.	**THE TWO FACES OF ISLAM,** Stephen Schwartz (4)	7
9.	**THE NIGHT MAN** David Frum (6)	4
10.	**ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF DESTRUCTION,** W.G. Sebold (3)	9

() Weeks on list
Compiled by Brian Bethune

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THE QUESTION OF WAR

My heart is with the peacemakers on Iraq—but my head tells me otherwise

AS WAR LOOMS IN IRAQ, those of us who first started paying attention to world affairs during the bloody zenith of the Vietnam War are doing a lot of soul-searching. Nearly 30 years after it ended, Vietnam still looks to us like an appalling, unjustified, tragic waste of human life. But what about this new war on terrorism and what some are touting as its latest front—regime change in Baghdad, by brute force if necessary? Why is it that Colin Powell and Tony Blair (we'll discount George W. Bush because of his unfortunate swagger and bluster) often seem more credible to some of us than, say, Jacques Chirac? Did Sept. 11 change everything? Or is it we who have changed? Have we become conservative and hawkish in middle age? Are we in danger of abandoning the ideals we once held dear?

It would be comforting to be among the true believers in this current crisis, either a confirmed dove or hawk. But, like many Canadians, I suspect, I am essentially an agnostic—someone who reads and hears a lot about the rationales for and against war and can be persuaded one way and then the other depending on the arguments presented. In the rush to war, some have called us indecisive fence-sitters. Well, so be it. When the precipice is this steep, it's best to know the odds of a safe landing before making the leap.

For me, the strongest case in favour of war is that Saddam Hussein is, quite simply, the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps in another era a similar despot, with a horrific record of killing his own people and threatening his neighbours, might be tolerated or even courted (hello there, Mr. Stalin). But post-Sept. 11, this no longer washes. The potential dangers are simply too great. Critics scoffed when Powell, in an impassioned address to the United Nations, raised the spectre of the damage that could be wreaked on America and its allies if Hussein's chemical and biological weapons fell into the hands of terrorists. It sounded pretty convincing, and chilling, to me. Who cares if Saddam heads a secular state that Muslim fundamentalists like Osama bin Laden despise? Is the enemy of my enemy not sometimes my friend?

Alas, for many of those same critics, nothing really changed on Sept. 11. Their instinctive anti-Americanism could not be contained as they immediately responded to the loss of more than 3,000 lives (24 of them, by the way, Canadians) by declaring that U.S. foreign policy had brought on the tragedy. Even now, I find myself listening sympathetically to certain peace activists—until, that is, they begin to prattle on about how Bush represents an equal, if not greater, force of evil than Hussein or bin Laden. Where, one wonders, would they rather live and raise their families—in Baghdad or in Washington, under the thumb of the Taliban or in the bosom of one of the world's oldest democracies?

On the other hand, it seems to me the strongest argument of those opposed to war, apart from the appalling suffering and loss of life ordinary Iraqis will endure, is the murky question of what happens after the U.S. invades and conquers. Anti-war activists are quite right to point out that previous U.S. administrations have had a terrible record when it comes to picking winners and losers. In Vietnam, they arrogantly backed one dictator against another—and sent nearly 50,000 young Americans to their graves for this dubious cause. In Latin America, they undermined legitimate democratic movements because of a misguided and myopic view of what constituted the U.S. national interest. America helped create the monsters that are Saddam and Osama. If that's what we're talking about here, then excuse me while I crank up the Who's *Won't Get Fooled Again*.



Which leads back to the soul-searching. I try to ask myself: what if my children were being asked to prosecute this war? (They're too young right now, but that won't always be the case.) It's something I'm not ready to contemplate—even though I know I should. After all, it's always someone's children who are asked to serve, to kill, to die. I also wonder what my own father, who recently passed away, would have made of all this. Actually, I think I know. A Second World War veteran, he never talked about his experiences during six years of combat—a silence that spoke volumes. My hunch is he saw much horror, and little glory, in war, and I'm almost certain he would have been against the invasion of Iraq. And, to be sure, that makes a bigger impression on me than any of the chickenhawks, including the current White House incumbent, who never experienced combat and are now among war's biggest cheerleaders.

And yet, and yet. As much as my heart is with the peace marchers, my head remembers that many of these same people argued against intervention in Afghanistan following Sept. 11. As if we could deal with the likes of Osama bin Laden and the other fanatics who murdered more than 3,000 innocents through improved dialogue and conflict resolution workshops. Hey, can't we all just get along?

Unhappily, sometimes we can't. And, on very rare occasions, war is not only warranted, but morally justified. Is this one of those cases? I'm not there yet. But the fact I'm even considering it shows how much both I, and the times, have changed. M

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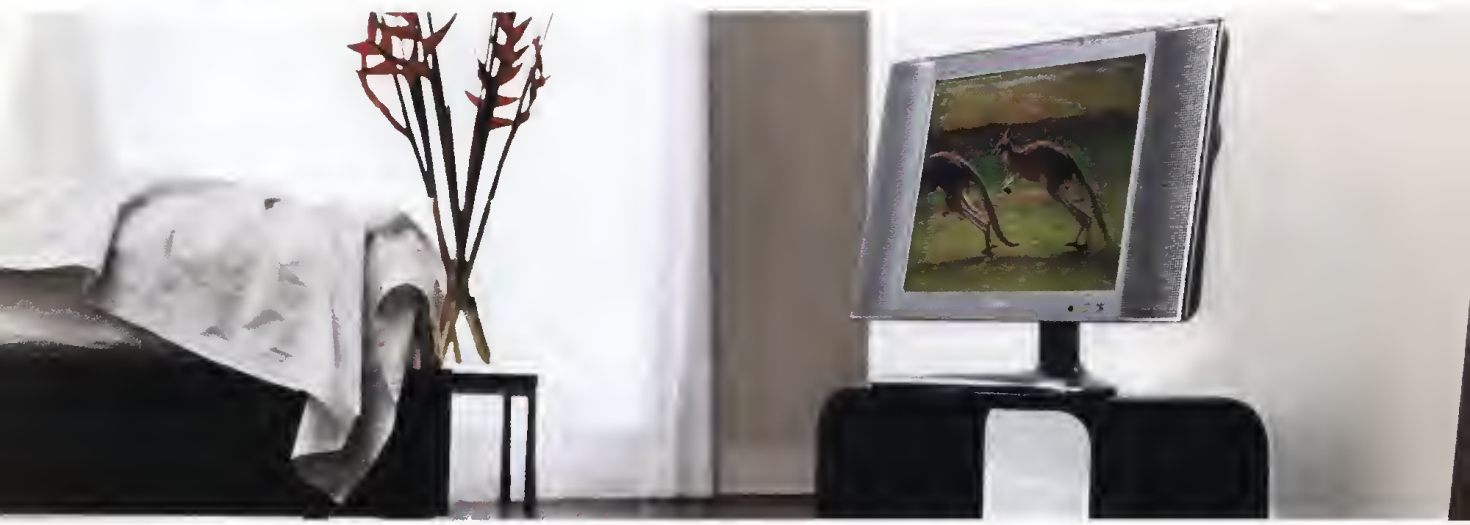


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